The COMMUNIST

DECEMBER

THE PEOPLE'S FRONT MOVES FORWARD!
BY EARL BROWDER

American Origin of the People's Front — WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

Fascism Menaces Mexico — HERNAN LABORDE

Marxism-Leninism for Society and Science — V. J. JEROME

The Rubber Workers Show the Way — JOHN WILLIAMSON

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The COMMUNIST

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REVIEW OF THE MONTH

Monopoly Sabotage and Mass Layoffs in Industries. Situation Calls for Organized and Disciplined Struggle. Break Economic and Political Sabotage of Monopolies. Maverick Makes a Charge. Cause and Perspectives of Business Recession. Lovestoneism Rushes to Defend Wall Street. Special Tasks of Trade Unions. Enlarged Meeting of Communist Political Bureau and Browder's Report. Key Propositions in Further Promotion of People's Front. How to Meet Reactionary Offensive in Congress. Meaning of Election Results. Relationships Between Labor and Roosevelt. Raise Question to Level of Principle. Wanted, a Progressive Bloc in Congress. Strength and Weakness of Detroit Elections. A Comparison With New York. Fascist Bloc in the Americas. Dimitroff on True Anti-Fascism. Progress and Tasks of the Communist Party. Browder and Foster Urge the Party to Greater Achievements.

LAYOFFS . . . layoffs . . . layoffs. . . . In steel, auto, railroad, rubber, textile, electric power, garments. In nearly all industries. Tens of thousands, hundreds of thousands of workers thrown out of employment, without notice, without the slightest care or regard to the fate of millions of our people, the creators of the nation's wealth, to the fate of their wives, children, and other dependents.

Not just layoffs, but sweeping discharges, on a scale totally unjustified by the degree of business recession even when measured by capitalist standards, which are bad enough. Sweeping discharges with a cunning selectivity which seeks to drive out of the industries the loyal unionists and conscious fighters for the good of the working class, discharges carried out in a brazen and provocative way which can have only one purpose: To drive the workers to desperation. This is true especially in the auto industry (General Motors), in the steel industry, and in some of the public utilities like the Consolidated Edison in New York.

Let us say at the outset that 1937 is not 1929—in more than one sense. The American people will not meekly acquiesce in another economic catastrophe brought on by the monopolies and their system. The American people will not stand passively by and see their homes and lives ruined by the blind workings-out of a system which enslaves them, *by the criminal sabotage of the high priests of that system —the Rockefellers, Morgans, du Ponts —who recklessly aggravate existing economic difficulties to get even with the workers, the farmers, the middle classes, the Roosevelt administration.*

The American people and its working class will fight. They are already

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strong enough to fight as an organized, disciplined, and conscious force, on a clear and practical program, to break the economic and political sabotage of the monopolies, to enforce the people's will.

There is no cause for despair or acts of desperation. It is the monopolies, their reactionary and fascist spokesmen, that seek to throw the masses into desperate moods and to drive them to acts of desperation. But the people—the discharged workers, the unemployed, the farmers, the middle classes—all those who already feel the heavy hand of the offensive of reaction—have all the reasons in the world to feel confident that they will be able to defeat the sabotage of the monopolies. Provided, however, that the working class itself unites its ranks; strengthens its collaboration with the farmers, middle classes, and all progressive forces; maps a course of action called for by the situation on the economic and political fields, and proceeds in an organized and disciplined way against the main enemy —the monopolistic sabotagers and their political reaction.

Sporadic and spontaneous sit-down strikes have already broken out in several plants of the auto and rubber industries. Like lightning, these strikes reveal the profound discontent and resentment of the workers with the chicanery and sabotage of the monopolies, their violations of union contracts, persecutions of union men and—the last drop in the sea of working class patience—the sudden mass discharges. These spontaneous strikes reveal a temper among the workers of which the sabotaging monopolists had better beware.

It is true, and this must be explained to the widest masses, that isolated and spontaneous actions of this kind cannot in the present situation break the sabotage and offensive of the monopolies and enforce the will of the people. Conceivably, such actions, if left to themselves, may even hurt the workers and the cause of the people generally. But the spirit, the temper, the consciousness, and determination displayed by the workers in these strikes are a tremendous force for progress and for the people's good. This force can and must be organized for planful and coordinated action, in collaboration with all progressive elements in the country, on a program of measures that already unites a majority of our people. It is the program of the developing People's Front in America. A program which is being hammered out in life itself. The programmatic declarations of President Roosevelt, the declarations and statements of policy by John L. Lewis, and the legislative program of the C.I.O., adopted at its conference in Atlantic City—these already form a basic program of the People's Front behind which stands the overwhelming majority of the American people.

Consolidate the forces of the People's Front and move them to struggle for this program. Time does not wait. This was the message of Comrade Browder's report to the enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party (November 18-19). This is the message of the Communist Party to the working class and people of America in the present situation.

A situation of recession in business accompanied by widespread layoffs

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and a serious drop in the purchasing power of the toiling people; a situation threatening a new economic crisis hastened by the economic sabotage of the monopolies, the strike of Big Capital, and by the political reaction now running wild in Washington around the Special Session of Congress, a reactionary orgy inspired and backed by the monopolies; a situation of increasing war aggressions and provocations by the newly crystallized fascist bloc of Germany, Japan, and Italy, which is engineering fascist rebellions in the Americas and is making more imminent the outbreak of a new world war; a situation, in short, which demands imperatively:

A wider unfolding of the struggle for the unity of the working class and, as an acute phase of it, for trade union unity as conceived by the C.I.O.

A more rapid consolidation of the forces of the People's Front which has received such powerful impetus in the recent elections.

A determined and organized struggle by the masses to break the economic sabotage of the monopolies, for the maintenance of recovery trends, for a higher standard of living, for the preservation and extension of democratic rights and liberties, for curbing the fascist aggressors, for peace and collective security.

For the realization of the people's mandate of 1936 which was definitely reaffirmed in the elections of 1937.

* * *

AROUSED by the brazen economic sabotage of the monopolies and by the outbreak of a hooligan reactionary offensive by the puppets of the monopolies in Congress, Congressman Maverick broadcast a speech, saying: "This is a revolution by big money." An attempted rebellion would be more correct, in our judgment, but we will not quarrel about words. What Maverick meant was the reactionary offensive against the Special Session of Congress inspired and backed by "Big Money."

Referring to the cry of the reactionary pack that the only way to avoid a crisis is to "lighten" the burden of taxation upon the monopolies and to stop all social legislation and relief to the masses, Maverick said:

> "The whole cry is to evade the purpose of this Special Session, forget our fundamental problems of unemployment and recovery, blindly and hurriedly repeal the taxes on the wealthy and big corporations and let the people of the country slide back into the abyss."

This is true, of course. The Communist Party, as the vanguard party of the American working class, has directed the attention of the people to the conspiracies of the monopolies and has proposed a program of action to combat and defeat them.

Obviously displaying a guilty conscience, *The New York Times* is trying to apologize for and whitewash the Wall Street buccaneers who are now playing so recklessly with the well-being and peace of the American people. Says the *Times:*

> "American business men have fully as much reason as the government to desire a genuinely prosperous country, with a constantly advancing standard of living, and so much purchasing power available in all walks of life that no part of the nation will need to be ill-clad, ill-nourished and ill-housed." (November 18, 1937.)

Thus the *Times* tries to meet Mav-

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erick's charge, polemizing in passing also against President Roosevelt. But the charge is not met and the polemics are invalid. Maverick made his charge *not against all business men;* he made it clearly against big business, the monopolies, "Big Money." These were the words he used, and correctly so. Small business men, the majority of the class, and a good number of the medium ones, are themselves victims of the rebellion of "Big Money." It is the reactionary monopolies that are charged with the crime of economic and political sabotage, with carrying on a strike against the well-being of the majority of the people. And this charge the *Times* cannot meet. Especially so as it carried on its own financial pages statements by big business men themselves admitting that they are on strike.

Turn to the *Times* of October 23:

"Capitalists are on strike. . . . High taxes, large risks and uncertainty of costs and conditions from labor agitation explain the reason for the strikes. . . . The very large capitalist is on strike because he is faced with an 80 per cent tax on his profits on stocks. . . . He will not risk financing new ventures if the government's take in is greater than that of the average gambling house."

And who said that? Why, Mr. O'Neil, President of the General Tire and Rubber Company, as reported by the *Times* itself.

The "merits" of his arguments are not our concern for the moment. Besides, we are not so familiar with gambling house practices as Mr. O'Neil. But we are concerned with emphasizing his admission that "the very large capitalist is on strike." The *Times* cannot deny that, nor can anyone else.

But, it may be asked, would even big capitalists purposely aggravate economic conditions for political advantages when they themselves run the risk of losing money in consequence? The answer to which is: yes, they did this many times before, especially prior to the first world imperialist war, on the eve of presidential or other important elections, engineering panics on the stock exchange and aggravating (through mass layoffs and other means) existing tendencies of recession. Reactionary finance capital has been doing that in France in its struggle against the People's Front. Only most of the time the monopolies manage not to lose any money, making the masses pay instead, because, controlling such vast fields of the nation's economy, the monopolies are able to make good in one place the losses incurred in another

Besides, when the accumulation of profits and capital by the monopolies has been going on at a rapid rate for a considerable time, with no corresponding reinvestments for expansion, as has been the case here for nearly three years, the monopolies feel they can afford *to gamble* with some of these accumulated funds *when big political issues are at stake.* And the issue is: to defeat the people's mandate of 1936, reinforced by the elections of 1937, to stem the advance of labor and of the camp of progress generally, to prepare a comeback to power of reaction in 1938 and in 1940, to destroy democracy and bring fascism.

Big capital is a big gambler. Having been on the winning side for such a long time, the monopolists feel encouraged this time also to risk big. *But 1937 makes a difference.* The

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line-up of forces at home and abroad, between the camp of progress and the camp of monopoly reaction, is growing so favorably to the people that, by consolidating their forces, they can actually make the monopolies *lose;* and so reverse a trend of decades.

That is what Comrade Browder demonstrated at the enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party. This is what we must bring to the masses and convince them of.

At this point, some renegades from Communism, people of the Lovestoneite brand, and with them some Trotskyite spy (and how do you tell now which is which), the agents of the enemy which have done their damnedest to cheat Detroit labor out of a victory in the elections by sabotaging and slandering the People's Front policy—at this point Lovestone pops up to insinuate that the Communist Party has abandoned Marxism. This Lovestone person, you may recall, is the same one who in 1928 tried to sell our Party the bourgeois trash that American capitalism was headed for a new epoch of prosperity, that capitalism was becoming "organized" and free of crises, and therefore Marxism was no longer applicable to the United States.

Naturally, our Party repudiated the scheme together with its author (who was merely following Bukharin's efforts to revise Marxism to suit the bourgeoisie) and expelled him from its midst. Now, this same person Lovestone (or, is there a better word?), whose name is being cursed by every auto worker who knows the damage this man is doing to the auto union, this same Lovestone, who tried to tell us on the eve of the 1929 crash that American capitalism was "organized" for a whole epoch of prosperity, is now slandering our Party for telling the American people that the monopolies are purposely aggravating a difficult economic situation, are sabotaging still existing recovery trends within a maturing economic crisis, in order to break labor and the New Deal.

Lovestone, you see, is perfectly satisfied to have the workers believe that capitalism, the system of insoluble contradictions and anarchy of production, the system which inevitably produces cyclical crises, is able to "organize" itself and produce a whole epoch of prosperity. He is satisfied, that is, because big business wants the workers to believe precisely that. The present-day howl of big business is what? It is that, if only the C.I.O. would cease organizing the workers; if the workers would cease fighting for better conditions; if the Roosevelt administration would fold up its New Deal and give the monopolies free rein as in the days of Hoover; in short, if only Roosevelt and Lewis would stop "interfering" with the monopolies and let them regain "confidence," then, oh then, big capital would "organize" itself and give the country a new and big spell of prosperity.

Isn't that what the reactionary press is drumming into our ears day after day? Sure. And this is in substance what Lovestoneism tries to smuggle into the labor movement, hiding of course its big business origin. When exposed, the workers will repudiate this stuff as decisively as we do. In fact, the workers are al-

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ready repudiating it by their determination *to break the economic and political sabotage of the reactionary monopolies.* The workers are already beginning to fight for the slogans and demands formulated by the Communist Party.

The Communist Party consistently exposes and combats the falsity of the assertions of big business apologists that the monopolies, when left "alone," can at will and in an "organized" way make prosperity or crisis, rain or shine. We say this is not true. Cyclical crises are inevitable under the capitalist system and monopoly domination. Such a cyclical crisis is maturing at the present time within the frame of the general crisis of the capitalist system. Only socialism, as in the Soviet Union, is free of economic crises.

But, it may be asked, if a new cyclical crisis is inevitable, then why blame the monopolies? The answer to which is: because they are *hastening* the outbreak of the crisis, because they are *aggravating* the existing tendencies of *recession* while *sabotaging* the equally existing tendencies of *recovery.* They are doing this criminal work, almost boasting about it, in order to break labor, in order to break Roosevelt, in order to prevent the coming together of the workers, farmers, and middle classes for common action against the monopolies and to crush each of these groups separately, in order to stem the growth of the camp of progress in this country, of the camp of the People's Front.

That is why the Communist Party has said: the economic crisis is not here yet, although it is maturing. It need not come at this time unless a big crisis should break out in such a country as England. But the outbreak of the crisis here is definitely hastened by the monopolies sabotaging recovery for reactionary and fascist political purposes; and the present recession in business may prove the beginning of the crisis if the people do not organize *to meet and defeat* the economic and political sabotage of the monopolies.

It can be done. The Communist Party program of action to meet the present situation shows how. It also shows in the perspective that a victory of the people over the monopolies, the success of the People's Front forces in breaking the economic and political sabotage of the monopolies, will most certainly open up *new possibilities* for protecting and insuring the security and well being of the toiling masses of this country.

The trade unions have great tasks before them at the present time. The C.I.O. and the progressive forces in the A. F. of L. have already taken numerous steps to realize these tasks. We refer especially to the historic decisions of the C.I.O. national conference and its legislative program, its plans for further organization of the unorganized, its program for trade union unity. Unfortunately, this momentous program of action, infused with the broad perspectives of John L. Lewis' programmatic declarations, has not yet been brought sufficiently to the masses; nor have the C.I.O. unions as yet taken up this program in *each industry* for concretization and immediate application. This has to be done at once, not alone in the unions of the C.I.O., but also in those of the A. F. of L. and

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in the Railroad Brotherhoods. Only in this way will an effective and disciplined struggle be carried on against layoffs, for the maintenance of recovery, *for the right of the worker to a job,* and for the entire program against the economic and political sabotage of the monopolies. The collaboration of many unions with the Workers Alliance in pursuit of this struggle is an outstanding and most welcome development in the present situation, something that needs to be done in all localities and industries. This—together with a still broader mobilization of the masses in support of the C.I.O. program for trade union unity and an intensified continuation of the fine campaign by the progressive forces in the A. F. of L. for greater pressure upon the Executive Council.

* * *

LOOKING at the Congressional situation around the emergency session, as it was shaping up in the first week, one cannot help feeling that the forces of progress, inside Congress and out, are again in danger of remaining ineffective, despite the tremendous resources of *power* at their disposal.

It is evident that the reactionary monopolies and their puppets in Congress have again stolen a march on the people. And why? Because the people's forces have been and still are slow in coming together *for concerted action.* This is the key. Not so much the question of program; this is already in existence in its broad outlines. The declarations of President Roosevelt, the programmatic statements of John L. Lewis, the legislative proposals of the C.I.O. conference which incorporate a number of basic measures of importance, not alone to labor but also to the toiling farmers and middle classes—all these present a basic program broad enough to rally the overwhelming majority of the American people. All these have already been endorsed by the American people. That is why we say: the trouble is not in the lack of program *but in the absence of publicly coordinated and united action* in favor of this program. Differences of opinion on details of the program, and important ones, do and will continue to exist. But this need not worry us because these differences can and will be composed, since the foundation for agreement are recognized.

Why then this intolerably slow rate of motion toward organized concerted action? It is almost humiliating to watch the passivity and apparent demoralization of the progressive forces in Congress in the face of the brazen offensive and sabotage of the reactionaries. And this, mind you, on the morrow after the elections which have given such an unmistakable endorsement to the progressive forces.

In the Senate, one Southern reactionary cabal, headed by Bailey of North Carolina, George of Georgia, and Connally of Texas, in cahoots with the Republicans, are sabotaging the people's will under the brazen and provocative slogan of "relieving" big business of taxation and government regulation. In the House, another reactionary clique of Southern Democrats, jointly with a group of Republicans, are equally sabotaging the will of the people and the President's program, especially the Wages

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and Hours Bill. And the progressives? They seem to be making some sort of gestures which get them nowhere; the President has not been heard from since the opening message; and the spokesmen of labor seem to be standing on the sidewalk watching the spectacle. William Green would appear to be in hiding as far as the special session of Congress is concerned, while all that has been heard even from John L. Lewis thus far was only a correctly qualified endorsement of the Wages and Hours Bill. But is that enough in the face of the offensive of reaction? Obviously not.

What is the matter? Is big business succeeding in driving a wedge between the President and labor? Are the monopolies really making serious headway in alienating the farmers from the workers, and the middle classes from both? In other words, are the reactionary monopolies and fascism in this country succeeding in their major strategy of checking the coming together of the forces of the People's Front? We do not think so. All that has happened since the 1936 elections proves definitely that down below, *among the masses,* the reactionary and fascist efforts to check the process of consolidation of the forces of the People's Front have made indeed very little headway; that this process of consolidation has been making progress, slow, to be sure, but progress none the less, despite the demagogic campaign of the reactionaries, widespread and intensive, by propaganda and economic pressure, to incite the farmers against the workers, the workers against the farmers, both of these against the middle classes, and all of them against the President. If the recent elections proved anything, they proved precisely this: *that the general trend of the political attitude of the masses is forward along the lines of the people's mandate of 1936.* More than that: the elections also demonstrated considerable progress in the development of the political maturity of labor, of its class consciousness, independence and growing role in the political life in the country. This is an additional source *of strength* to the camp of progress and democracy. And while in some places, like Detroit, certain sections of the middle classes displayed dangerous vacillations, tending to support reactionary candidates under the demagogy and pressure of the monopolies, yet it also demonstrated most impressively the growing political strength of labor which, with the application of the policy of the People's Front, would almost certainly have won the middle classes, would have united labor, and given victory to the camp of progress. New York is the most outstanding example.

In brief: the elections have given a most convincing fresh demonstration of the vitality and correctness of the policy of the People's Front, of its ability *to win, to defeat reactionary efforts to stage a comeback.*

Therefore, we must conclude that the main difficulties for the more rapid consolidation of the forces of the People's Front at the present time lie not among the masses, not largely there, *but among the leaders of these forces.* The trouble lies mainly on top, in the apparent reluctance of the top to straighten out contradictions, difficulties and misunderstandings. This is a serious thing to say,

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but what other conclusion can one arrive at?

We know, of course, that in a broad coalition of classes like the People's Front there are bound to be contradictions and differences. But these need not be an obstacle to the consolidation of these forces and their concerted action *on an anti-fascist People's Front platform*. Life itself, the events of the last two years in this country alone, not to speak of France and Spain, has proved this to be so. These contradictions and differences can be subordinated, ironed out, and composed for the sake of achieving the great aim of the present period—the defeat of reaction, fascism, and war, the realization of the people's mandate. But in order to achieve the consolidation of the People's Front forces, misunderstandings on top must be removed (and it can be done), greater clarity must be introduced into the mutual relationships of the various forces that go into the making of the People's Front. And this can be done also *by raising the whole question to the high level of principle and honest dealing*.

On this key angle of the situation, two points should be considered. The key angle in the situation is the point stressed by us many times before, even while approaching the elections of 1936, namely, the relationship between labor and President Roosevelt. We urged relationships *based on principle*, and this, in the given line-up of class forces, meant *the relationships of alliance* with all that that implied. And it implied two things: (a) an acceptance by the President of the developing class independence and organization of labor, of its growing political role in the life of the country, of its distinct class contribution to the cause of progress and democracy in the United States; and (b) an acceptance by labor of the policy of collaboration with all other progressive forces in the country, on the basis of building labor's own independent political strength and organization; a rejection of the old discredited line of narrow trade union politics which excludes such collaboration and thus dooms labor to the role of plaything in the hands of capitalist politicians.

By and large, this was how the relationships between labor and the President have been developing in life. Not without friction. Not without conflicts. Reaction has tried many times to exploit these frictions and conflicts to insert a wedge between labor and the President in order to break the alliance between the two, and to check and destroy the People's Front movement developing around this alliance as its axis. In this major strategy of the fascist-minded monopolies, reacton did not succeed. But it did manage to slow up the strengthening of the alliance and the more rapid consolidation of the People's Front forces around it. It was able to do this largely because the President was reluctant (to say the least) to accept the growing political independence of labor as a consistent bourgeois democrat should, willingly and in a spirit of collaboration, and because also certain progressive leaders of labor had not always pursued a consistent policy of the People's Front; some of them refusing to promote sufficiently the political independence of labor, others tending to substitute for this class independence a

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narrow trade union conception which underestimates and excludes proper collaboration with all other progressive forces.

To put it plainly: labor will advance against the forces of reaction, fascism and war, and through this, to its final liberation from capitalism, only by cementing its own class unity and political independence and in the building and victory of the People's Front. At the present time there is no other way forward. And the most advantageous way of building the People's Front from the standpoint of the class interests of labor is the way of collaboration and stronger alliance with President Roosevelt and the democratic forces which he represents. This too seems to be the best way in the present line-up of class forces nationally and internationally. This is point one. Point two is that President Roosevelt can successfully fight for his own declared program *only* by collaborating and strengthening his alliance with labor, *only* by accepting labor as an ally, as a class having a distinct and, in the longer run, decisive contribution to make to the progress, democracy and happiness of the American people.

President Roosevelt, and the democratic forces which he represents, must realize (as many of them are already realizing) that without an alliance with labor as an independent political force, the President's declared program is doomed to defeat. And something else has to be realized by the President's camp: this country and the world at large are not the same as in the age of Jefferson or Jackson, in more than one respect. Also, naturally, in respect to the position and role of labor. Labor today can no longer be viewed as just an appendage to the bourgeois democracy of the country. And for two reasons: labor is too strong and class conscious for that. Labor is already politically articulate as a class. It would therefore be unrealistic and impractical for consistent bourgeois democrats to overlook this basic fact. The other reason is that precisely this growing independence and strength of labor *is the major guarantee* that the camp of progress and democracy will win, that the forces of reaction will be defeated, that the President will be able to carry on a successful fight for his own declared program.

We therefore urge a clarification of these issues among the leadership of the People's Front forces, a removal of artificial misunderstandings, a raising of the whole issue *to the level of principle,* a resolution of the existing contradictions and differences in favor of a more rapid consolidation of the forces of the People's Front around the Roosevelt-labor alliance.

And as part of the more important immediate steps along this line of endeavor, especially to meet the situation created by the sabotage of the reactionary offensive, we urge:

1. The immediate organization of a broad progressive bloc in Congress of all members favoring the People's Front platform and the President's proposals, as discussed in the foregoing, including the Farmer-Laborites, the Wisconsin Progressives, the progressive Democrats, and the progressive elements among the Republicans.

2. A united declaration by labor (the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L.) in favor of such a progressive bloc and

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a clear demand that the Special Session of Congress pass the measures of the people's platform, mobilizing all resources of labor to break the sabotage of the reactionaries; a speeding up of the unification of the trade union movement along the lines of the C.I.O. proposals and an intensive building up in all localities of Labor's Non-Partisan League into a genuine mass political organization democratically administered.

3. Conditions are becoming ripe for the convocation of a national People's Congress on labor, farmer, Negro and middle class legislation. Preliminary conferences for such a Congress should be initiated at once by representatives of interested organizations.

4. The American Labor Party, which scored such a significant victory in the recent elections, should be built up into a true mass organization on the basis of true inner democracy, strengthening its collaboration with the other progressive forces in city and state. Special efforts should be made to establish correct relations with the toiling farmers of the state.

5. In certain states, such as New Jersey, where conditions are similarly ripe, the existing plans for the organization of a Labor Party should be carried forward with utmost energy.

6. In the Northwestern region, with its pivotal Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota, it is imperative that the initiative be taken jointly by the Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota, the Farmer-Labor Progressive Federation of Wisconsin, by Labor's Non-Partisan League, and by the progressive elements in the old parties to map out and execute plans for joint action to organize the People's Front forces of that region in preparation for the Congressional elections of 1938.

All of these above-stated measures should be undertaken with a view to strengthening and organizing the progressive forces of the 1938 Congressional elections.

These are the lines of guidance and action proposed by Comrade Browder in his report and accepted by the recently-held enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau of the Communist Party as the policy of the Party.

* * *

SEEING the almost complete success of progressive and labor candidates in the recent elections, the reactionary press tries to derive comfort from the one outstanding exception, the victory of the reactionary candidates in Detroit. Some comfort, of course, reaction is able to derive. But in doing so, it is also trying to tell labor to beware of "going it alone," to come back to the old practice of dragging behind the capitalist parties, to abandon the path of independent working class political action. Which is all malicious and misleading nonsense.

Labor in Detroit has given a most impressive demonstration of growing political maturity, of indisputable power, of great possibilities *for independent class political action,* to the benefit of the workers, middle classes, farmers and the whole camp of progress. As reaction celebrates the defeat of labor's candidates in Detroit, it also seeks to hide its fears of the demonstrated strength of labor. This demonstrated strength is invaluable capital for further political advances by labor

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and the people generally, not only in Detroit, but in the country as a whole.

Yet, despite all this strength of Detroit's labor, its candidates were defeated. This too is an important fact. In New York, the proportion of labor's vote to the total was smaller than in Detroit, yet labor's candidates scored victories; but not in Detroit. Why?

The Communist Party advanced two chief reasons for it. Labor in Detroit failed to build up an independent political organization of its own; it also failed to follow a consistent policy of collaboration with other progressive forces. In other words, *it did not follow a correct working class independent political policy.* It did not follow the policy of the People's Front.

It is nonsense to assert, as some do, that the Detroit policy was a correct working class policy "on the grounds" that the trade unions were dominant in the campaign. Lenin and Stalin have shown long ago that trade union politics are not working class politics. Working class politics are based on the immediate as well as general interests *of the class,* whereas trade union politics are based upon the immediate narrow interests of a group of workers, of a craft, of a particular union. This theoretical distinction has tremendous practical consequences, as was shown graphically in Detroit. A class political policy seeks to embrace in a distinct political organization all trade unions and other working class organizations. In Detroit, the campaign was carried on, not as the vital affair of all labor, not even as the affair of all trade unions, but largely as the affair of one union —the auto workers union, with no distinct and united political labor instrument in existence. With the result that Martel's splitting tactics were to a degree successful in keeping a section of labor's vote away from labor's candidates. And with the additional result that the reactionary monopolies (Ford, General Motors, etc.), found it easier to alienate the sections of the middle class which had been previously aroused and prejudiced by the reactionaries against the auto workers.

Furthermore: a class political policy of labor at the present time dictates imperatively collaboration with the middle classes and all progressive forces. It dictates the policy of the People's Front. This is the outstanding lesson of the recent elections. But in Detroit this policy was not followed. And for this, the Trotskyite wreckers and Lovestoneite splitters bear a good deal of responsibility. Our Party had warned and advised the labor movement against this danger consistently, though not enough was done about it locally, stressing the utmost need of independent political organization, unity of labor's forces, and wide collaboration with the middle classes. The dominant leadership of Detroit's labor campaign did not heed this advice.

In Detroit, in short, there was neither an independent political organization of labor, nor a policy of collaboration with the middle classes. There was no class policy of labor; hence, no People's Front policy; hence, the defeat of labor's candidates, *despite the magnificent demonstration of labor's strength and political activity.* The impression is inescapable that the dominant leadership

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of the campaign was unable (some were unwilling) to translate labor's undoubted strength, its growing class consciousness and combativeness, into correct working class policy.

In New York, our Party had repeatedly pointed out and criticized many weaknesses and shortcomings in the work of the Labor Party: its insufficiently organized mass basis from below, the lack of inner democracy, its reluctance to embrace political organizations of workers and other progressives, opportunist tendencies to unprincipled political bargaining and serious inadequacies in its municipal platform. At the same time, we had also stressed the two essential requirements for a correct policy which were present in the Labor Party: independent political organization and a policy of collaboration with other progressive forces, with the middle classes especially. This gave us the victory.

It can be stated generally: where labor's policy was approaching definitely that of the People's Front, there labor and the camp of progress scored significant victories (New York, Buffalo, Pittsburgh, and the coal and steel towns of Western Pennsylvania). But where labor's policy was hesitant and reluctant to approach the People's Front, where it lacked independent political organization, was saturated with narrow trade union content and form, failing to collaborate widely with the middle classes (Detroit, for example), there labor's candidates failed of election, despite the great magnitude and proportion of labor's vote.

The correctness of the Communist Party policy of the People's Front has thus received a most convincing and impressive confirmation. Hence, build in Detroit Labor's Non-Partisan League and with it—the People's Front.

* * *

From the historic celebrations of the twentieth anniversary of the great October socialist revolution, enthusiastically participated in by all true friends of peace, democracy and socialism the world over, the peoples of the Soviet Union are making ready for the first elections under the great Stalin Constitution. The anniversary celebrations in the United States have demonstrated afresh the growing friendship between the peoples of the two countries. In the widening and strengthening of this friendship lies one of the strongest guarantees for the successful struggle for peace and democracy.

The need for such guarantees against the victory of the fascist war offensive is becoming stronger and more urgent every day. No longer is the bloc of the fascist powers (Germany, Italy, and Japan) satisfied with fomenting war and rebellion only in Europe, Asia, and Africa. It is now stretching out its bloody hands to the countries of the Americas. The American people are forced to recognize that the fascist bloc is establishing right by our door reserves and jumping-off grounds for rebellion and war aggression against the peoples of the Americas as well as in preparation for a world war. We refer to the establishment of a fascist dictatorship in Brazil under Hitler direction, the consolidation of fascist influence in the countries of Central America and Cuba, the known conspiracies of the fascist

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powers jointly with the Mexican reactionaries and assisted by the reactionary monopolies of the United States to overthrow the Cardenas government in Mexico.

What happened to Spain and to China can happen also to the countries of Latin America, and to the peoples of the United States and Canada, if the war aggressions of the fascist bloc are not curbed by the concerted action of the peace-loving nations and countries.

All possible aid to Republican Spain and to China—this is the most urgent task of the moment; aid by the people of this country as well as by the government. The peace movement of America must demand of the Special Session of Congress to revise the "Neutrality Law" in such a way as will enable China and Republican Spain to get all the necessary help from this country—a revision along the lines of collective security. Most important is the acute need to beat back, by mass pressure and demonstrations, the attack of the reactionaries against the President's peace program.

In view of the growing threat to world peace, and the extension of this offensive to the Americas, it is more necessary than ever before to render all possible assistance to the Soviet Union in its fight for peace. It is necessary to strain all efforts to secure collaboration between the governments of the United States and the Soviet Union in the pursuance of the task of collective security against the fascist aggressors.

All real anti-fascists, all friends of peace and democracy and socialism, must be active friends and supporters of the Soviet Union. As Comrade Dimitroff said on the twentieth anniversary of the October Revolution:

> "The *touchstone* in checking the sincerity and honesty of every individual active in the working class movement, of every working class party and organization of the working people, and of every democrat in the capitalist countries, is their *attitude toward the great land of socialism*. You cannot carry on a real struggle against fascism if you do not render all possible assistance in strengthening *the most important buttress* of this struggle, the Soviet Union.
>
> "You cannot be a *real friend* of the U.S.S.R. if you do not condemn its enemies—the Trotsky-Bukharinist agents of fascism."

* * *

REVIEWING the role of the Communist Party in the recent elections and the course of its membership recruiting drive, Comrades Browder and Foster demonstrated before the enlarged meeting of the Political Bureau the growing role and importance of the Party in the political life of the country and in the labor movement, as well as progress in the struggle for Party building. Of this, every Party member can be justly proud. But our leaders also emphasized that there was positively no room for any sort of self-satisfaction; that, on the contrary, there is every ground to insist that the Party's growth in membership and in the circulation of its press is still out of step with the growth of its influence.

The true significance of our achievements and progress lies precisely in this: they demonstrate the tremendous opportunities for growth which we do not yet fully exploit; they demonstrate how much more we could achieve in Party building through the struggle for the unity of

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the working class and for the People's Front by improving the organization and political quality of our daily work among the masses.

There can be no doubt that the Party's policies and activities have contributed greatly toward the successes of labor and of the progressive candidates in the elections. The approximately 74,000 votes cast in New York City on the Communist Party ticket constitute 15.4 per cent of the vote for Mayor on the Labor Party ticket, the Communist vote in this city having grown from 64,436 in 1936 to 73,756 (incomplete) in 1937. And in all localities, the Party's policies and work played a most significant part in promoting the advance of the forces of the People's Front and their successes in the elections.

As to the recruiting drive. Though the work was somewhat slow in getting under way, and with still only a fraction of the membership carrying on actual recruiting, the 10,000 new members gained by November 1 must be considered significant progress as showing the great possibilities for Party building, for making Party building an inseparable feature of our daily mass work.

The Political Bureau drew the conclusions that the period remaining between now and Lenin Memorial Day, when the recruiting drive will be concluded by the National Party Builders Congress, must be fully utilized for steadily increasing the tempo of the drive, drawing into it wider circles of our membership, for raising substantially the proportion of dues-paying members, for improving all around the political mass work of our organizations, for assimilating and educating successfully the new and valuable gains in Party membership.

Centrally in the task of Party building must be placed the building up of our branches and units into active political centers of Communist leadership and for this purpose—the training and promotion of competent branch and unit organizers. The methods of preparing, organizing, and executing the Party's mass campaigns must be seriously improved. And from these angles: that the maximum number of Party members take part in them, that the branches and units participate actively *as such* in their respective territories and shops, that the Party's vanguard role (in the daily struggle and in the propaganda of our revolutionary aims) is brought to the masses convincingly and impressively, that recruiting of new members and the circulation of the Party press become part and parcel of our mass campaigns, that our political line and message are systematically brought to the masses, and that constant promotion of new leading forces is carried on.

We draw the attention of the Party to the forthcoming Lenin Memorial Day as the occasion for summing up the experiences of the recruiting drive and for carrying forward Party building as an inseparable phase of all our activities. It will be the special and appropriate occasion for intensifying the work of "Mastering Bolshevism" and for spreading widely among the masses the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. A. B.

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THE PEOPLE'S FRONT MOVES FORWARD! *

BY EARL BROWDER

I. THE INTERNATIONAL FASCIST OFFENSIVE AND AMERICA'S ROLE IN THE FIGHT FOR PEACE

THE experiences since our June Central Committee meeting have been extraordinarily rich, requiring a great deal of study and examination to assimilate all these experiences. Events within the country, as well as internationally, are sharpening up with such rapidity that a constant re-evaluation of developments is necessary. This extended meeting of the Political Bureau takes on a certain number of tasks that we had expected the Central Committee Plenum to perform, although this is only in the nature of a preliminary discussion, to lay the foundation for the coming Central Committee meeting, and to insure that the period between now and the Central Committee meeting will be one in which all of the leading comrades and the Party as a whole will see the line of development, especially arising from the last municipal elections, as well as other problems arising from the new developments at home and abroad.

We have invited to this meeting four comrades who have just returned from Spain—Comrade Steve Nelson, Comrade Bill Lawrence, Comrade Garland and Comrade Bradley. The presence of these leading comrades is of special significance for us, because they represent in their own persons one of the greatest assets that our Party has in this last period. One of the greatest achievements that our Party has ever made is the building of the Lincoln and Washington Battalions of the International Brigade. I suppose every member of our Party understands something of the great work that has been done in Spain, and the role that the Americans have played. The American movement has gained enormously in its international role, in its international recognition, by the work of our comrades in Spain, and I want especially to mention the role of Comrade Steve Nelson, who, everybody agrees, has been an outstanding representative of everything that is best in the progressive people's movement in America. We can be exceptionally proud of having such representatives in our movement. And the fact that these comrades are back with us now gives us an opportunity to show how much the Party appreciates such sterling, fundamental contributions. Without having the opportunity to discuss it with anybody, I am going to take the liberty of immediately suggesting an unusual step, out of the ordinary procedure of the Party, but one which I think everybody will agree with without much discussion: *that this meeting propose to the coming Central Committee Plenum the cooption of Steve Nelson*

* Report delivered to enlarged meeting of Political Bureau held November 18-19, 1937.

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to the Central Committee of our Party.

My report, comrades, is not going to be a systematic and thorough covering of all the problems before us, not a substitute for a Central Committee Plenum report, but in the nature of a preliminary discussion in which I will try to lay the foundation for a more thorough working out of the problems confronting the people of our country between now and the forthcoming Central Committee Plenum.

INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND OUR DOMESTIC PROBLEMS

In the first place, it is worth noting immediately the close hook-up between international politics and our domestic problems today, and to point especially to one of the international phenomena—the fascist propaganda offensive against the Roosevelt administration, especially since Roosevelt's Roanoke speech and the Chicago speech in October, which placed the President clearly in the position of the most outstanding anti-fascist spokesman within the capitalist democracies. The fascist international campaign has linked up Roosevelt and his followers directly with the "Communist menace." The so-called anti-Comintern pact of Germany, Japan and Italy, now a clear and definite alliance of the war-making powers, is openly including American democracy in its definition of Communism and in the list of enemies against which the anti-Comintern pact is directed. The intensification of the fascist invasion of Spain, and the development of the Japanese war against the Chinese people, if not stopped by collective actions of world democracies, are clearly and unmistakably now generally recognized as the first stages of the new world war.

It is necessary to take special note and emphasize the equivocal role being played by the British Tory Chamberlain government. The visit of Lord Halifax to Berlin, taking place this moment, and the British negotiations with Hitler are very definitely sabotage of the democratic front, much more than a flirtation with fascism. In the United States the reactionary forces are attempting to turn the foreign policies of the United States government in the direction of close collaboration between the United States, the British Tories and the fascist aggressors.

It is very interesting to note, by the way, how supposedly progressive publicists in the United States have been either tricked into or have deliberately chosen to join in with the campaign of the open reactionaries to cover up this British bid for alliance with Hitler by a flood of outrageous slanders and speculations about the possibilities of a Soviet-German rapprochement against the rest of the world. In *The New York Post* yesterday, columnist Jay Franklin wrote a whole column in which he stated as a "fact," that the policy of the Soviet Union is directed toward an alliance with Hitler; and he publishes this precisely at the moment when Britain is negotiating with Hitler in Berlin.

Where there is clearly a danger of the disruption of the European front and particularly of France and Britain, these people come forward with the danger of a Soviet-Hitler

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alliance. This is taken directly from the arsenal of the Trotskyite department of the fascist offensive. And it shows how the Trotskyites, as small as they are numerically, try to influence the weakest elements within the democratic front, to extend their wrecking and disruptive activities. This must be a sharp warning to us to stop thinking about the Trotskyite wreckers as merely Soviet enemies, or as extending only to Spain, or as being dangerous only in the presence of actual war. As we know, they already have organized insurrections in China to weaken the People's Front in their fight against Japan. These Trotskyites are doing their disruptive work every day in the United States; work that is exceedingly damaging and is equal or exceeds in its destructiveness the open reactionary forces and their newspapers.

In this respect we should also take note of the incident at the Madison Square Garden when the Catholic Church officially organized a demonstration against our Soviet anniversary celebration meeting and distributed leaflets with quotations from the well-known gangster of the pen, Max Eastman, from Eugene Lyons, and Emma Goldman, thereby giving official recognition by the Catholic hierarchy of the direct services to fascism by the Trotskyites and anarchists.

THE GROWING MENACE OF FASCISM IN THE AMERICAS

It is extremely symptomatic that the reactionary press of the United States, which in the past has been the most energetic champion of the Monroe Doctrine, has suddenly discovered that the fascists' crossing of the Atlantic Ocean, their open invasion into Latin America through the setting up of the fascist state in Brazil by the coup of Vargas, directly under Hitler's influence, must be accepted very calmly by the United States as being a normal Latin-American political development without relation to European or world politics.

Walter Lippmann, one of the highest paid publicists of the reactionaries, receiving as much, I believe, as the President of the United States for his daily column, spent a whole column the other day to prove that America must not get excited by the presence of the fascist state of Brazil, but should accept it and adjust itself to it as a normal part of American life. In exactly the same sense the press is now preparing for new problems in Mexico.

A couple of months ago when we began to speak very emphatically and openly about the fascist menace in Mexico, many people thought we were alarmists, that we were running ahead of events, that we were imagining things. Since that time it is being generally recognized that serious events are impending in Mexico. I have just learned that a foreign newspaper has sent one of its most noted correspondents to Mexico. In his conversation here in the United States he definitely told his friends that he was being sent to Mexico in anticipation of trouble and to be on the ground floor before trouble begins.

It is our considered judgment, as well as of the Communists and anti-fascists of Mexico, that there is in preparation a fascist armed insurrection in

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Mexico that is of exceedingly great danger. Tremendous stores of arms are being smuggled into Mexico and collected in Central American countries around Mexico, specially in Guatamala.

A widespread organization of Mexican reactionaries is spreading throughout the Southwest in the United States, directly in contact with big American interests such as those of Hearst. These interests have given up hope of getting intervention through Roosevelt and Washington to protect their special privileges. They have lost their last hope of influencing the Cardenas government from within, since the expulsion of Cedillo and because the People's Front is being forged around the Cardenas government. Precisely because of all this the fascists in Mexico and abroad, being especially under the influence of the drive of the triple fascist alliance, are pushing rapidly to decisive action against the Mexican people.

We must also note the open fascist tendencies expressed in the raids conducted by the provincial government of Canada and Premier Duplessis of Quebec. Beginning with the Communist and Left-wing newspaper, *Clarte*, they are rapidly extending to the whole C.I.O. movement and are now preparing to cover all international unions including the American Federation of Labor.

All of these things should make us more conscious of the fact that the fascist offensive around the American continent is right at our very door and is tied up directly with the Tory offensive of the opening of Congress. It is no accident that capitalist newspapers can describe the opening days of Congress as characterized by hooliganism on the part of the anti-Roosevelt bloc of Republicans and Democrats. When we see these ultra-conservative parliamentary representatives comporting themselves in Congress as hooligans, let us understand the meaning of it. It is an invitation and instruction to all their forces throughout the country to begin hooligan tactics, and public disturbances, to create trouble and an atmosphere of civil strife, to prepare for civil war against the people. This kind of tactics is an effort to overthrow the Roosevelt Administration in the second year of its second term.

THE FORCES OF DEMOCRACY AND PEACE ARE STRENGTHENING

It would, of course, be a mistake to emphasize the offensive of fascism without at the same time pointing out the extraordinarily important developments of the campaign for democracy and peace. Not the least of these is Roosevelt's Chicago speech in which he came out for the abandonment of the isolation and neutrality policy and called for concerted action of the democracies, and the 90 per cent of the people who want peace to restrain the fascist warmakers.

In connection with Roosevelt's Chicago speech, I want to read to you the formulations which I made in a speech immediately after Roosevelt's, which happened to be at the time I was at the Eighth Dominion Convention of the Canadian Party. This was printed in the *Daily Worker* and *The Communist*, and I suppose you have all read it, but due to the extraordinary importance of the issues

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involved, I think I should read the key paragraphs of that here, because as it stands, it is already a declaration of policy which was endorsed by our Political Bureau and of which there has not yet been a broader discussion. All of the comrades gathered here should definitely be clear with regard to this important declaration. In that speech on October 8, three days after Roosevelt's speech, I said:

"In the past few years, we Communists have been the sharpest critics of President Roosevelt, even while we were his staunch supporters when he fought against the reactionaries for progressive policies. Our criticism of the President has been especially sharp against what we considered his cowardly surrender to the reactionary neutrality policy.

"All the more clearly, then, because of our past criticism of President Roosevelt's foreign policy, must we of the Communist Party declare our full and complete support to the line laid down in his Chicago speech. It is the only course which can save the world from a terrible catastrophe.

"We have no illusions that the new course charted by President Roosevelt will be easy to execute. Above all, we are conscious of the strong and bitter enemies who will oppose a positive peace policy with all their power. These reactionary forces own or control most of the daily press of the United States. They control many leading positions in the President's own party. They are working hand in glove with Hitler and Mussolini in world affairs. They will move heaven and earth to defeat the President in his policy.

"Only the active support of the masses of the people in the United States, as well as in Canada and the other democratic countries of the West, can overcome the resistance of the accomplices of fascism and carry this positive peace policy into effect."*

The problems involved in our attitude towards Roosevelt's Chicago speech have been analyzed in more detail by Comrade Bittelman in his "Notes of the Month," published in the November issue of *The Communist*. This discussion of policy is upon the basis of an extended and detailed elaboration in the Political Bureau. Let me emphasize the absolute necessity of your reading and studying these "Notes," and preparing yourselves to make the whole Party, and the whole progressive movement, understand the policy that is developed there, as the only possible course for a consistent struggle for democracy and peace in the present world situation.

TROTSKYITE AGENTS OF THE FASCIST OFFENSIVE

It is very essential to arm our comrades on this question today, because the Trotskyite agents of the fascist offensive are, precisely on this question, doing their most damaging work.

The Trotskyite agents, though very small in number, are linking up the most backward prejudices among the American masses with outwardly seeming ultra-revolutionary slogans and attitudes. They are especially dangerous because they try to link themselves with reactionary leaders of the peace societies, which are pressing to preserve neutrality at all costs, and with confused, vacillating spokesmen that embody within them the most backward prejudices. That, plus the combination of the open reactionaries, constitutes the force, which, if not fought against vigorously, is a menace to the correct policy of Roosevelt in the Congress of the United States, and among large sections of the population. It is of more than ordinary importance to know

* See *The Communist* for November, 1937, page 1043.—*The Editors.*

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that among the progressive legislators in Congress, only a minority are outstandingly convinced of the President's Chicago speech. The majority of them are still uncertain on the question of foreign policy. The President cannot definitely rely upon those who are the most sincere adherents of his domestic policy to support his foreign policy.

Clearly, in this situation, every voice that can be used to give a "Left" coloration to this extremely reactionary attitude is of the greatest damage to the organization of the masses in their support of President Roosevelt's policy. Today we have all these elements turning their guns upon President Roosevelt, especially on this issue. With Norman Thomas in the forefront, they denounce the policy of concerted action of the democracies as the betrayal of peace, and represent the Roosevelt policy as the main enemy of the American people.

It is clear that on this question we have a major problem in which the results of our struggle in the United States will affect the fate of the entire world. The fact that Roosevelt in his Chicago speech came out so clearly and definitely, in such a developed form, with the correct program for America, is, however, a tremendous asset which we must more consciously and energetically keep in the foreground.

Comrades from Pittsburgh have reported to us how Roosevelt's speech changed the whole atmosphere of the situation in the unions with regard to sending delegates to the American League Congress for Peace and Democracy. And it was interesting to note from their reports how the workers went out and tried to explain the program of the League, asking the unions to send delegates, and usually the reply was by a motion from the floor to investigate what the Congress really was. But when workers came to the unions with the message to carry out Roosevelt's program for peace, the motion from the floor usually was to send representatives. When the advocates of peace get such allies as this, we should not be bashful or hesitant because it is a great help to all American people in choosing the correct path for peace.

THE SOVIET UNION—BULWARK OF WORLD PEACE AND DEMOCRACY

In taking note of the big developments which counter the offensive of fascism, it is of course necessary to speak of the developments in the Soviet Union. First there is the tremendous strengthening of the Soviet power in the period of its twentieth anniversary and the period of the completion of the Second Five-Year Plan. During these last months the big job of cleaning out the wreckers and traitors of the Trotskyite-Bukharinite gang has been carried through, accompanied by a great upsurge of forces produced by the Soviet democracy. And this is being crowned in a few weeks by the first elections under the Stalin Constitution.

It is becoming generally recognized even among those who still pretend to maintain the position of defense of democracy and peace, yet are opposed to the Soviet Union, that the Soviet Union is the only solid bulwark of world peace and democracy today, the only power that can be firmly depended upon.

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A couple of weeks ago we had the extraordinary example of a semi-official spokesmen of the British foreign office rebuking the Soviet Union for not energetically enough coming to the defense of Spanish democracy, for not energetically enough assisting the Chinese Republic, and declaring that the prestige of the Soviet Union had dropped because it had not yet wiped out Franco and because it had not bombed Tokio. Of course, we understand the provocative nature of this well-known British newspaperman, Augur. This was a deliberate provocation. That skilled journalist tries to cover up the treacherous role of the Tory government in England in relation to Spain and China. He tries to minimize what everybody knows the Soviet Union has done and will continue to do, under superhuman difficulties, to aid the peoples of Spain and China. But the fact that such provocation could be made, in the belief that it would have some influence, proves that even the reactionaries understand that the main mass of the population looks upon the Soviet Union as the power which is, first of all, charged with the defense of democracy and peace. And the thing they would not expect Great Britain to do, the thing they would not expect France to do, although it is right next to Spain, they do expect the Soviet Union to do, in spite of the distance that separates the two countries. What they consider insane for the United States to do in the Far East, they think natural for the Soviet Union to do. This is a great tribute to the power and prestige of the land of socialism and is a sign of the strength of the peace front and the growing possibilities of consolidating this peace front on a broader basis.

Our task in its broadest outlines in the United States, in relation to the world situation, is to mobilize all possible forces for the inclusion of America, through the Roosevelt administration, in the collective efforts for defense of peace and democracy, to establish collaboration of the American and Soviet peoples for this policy, together with all the threatened nations and the democracies sincerely interested in peace.

II. THE PRESENT ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL SITUATION IN THE UNITED STATES AND THE ADVANCE OF THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

Now a few words about the domestic situation within our country; first of all, about the economic recession and the new offensive of reaction. At our Central Committee meeting last June we noted that economic recovery, already approaching pre-crisis levels, although showing increasing signs of accumulating factors making for another crash, was on the whole continuing upward. Since then a decided downward trend has set in. A trend, already serious in the light industries throughout the summer, in the last weeks invaded heavy industry, particularly steel, and carried the whole economic index on a sharp decline. Thousands of factories have closed down; hundreds of thousands of workers have been thrown into the streets during the last weeks. The major question for us is whether this decline is the necessary result of those accumulating factors making for another crash, which we noted already

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in June. Our judgment is that this recession is not a necessary development at this time. There still remains sufficient economic basis for an upward trend of economy, or at least no more than a leveling off of that trend. If we have a sharp recession, the reason must be found not only in economic facts but in the political situation.

THE SIT-DOWN STRIKE OF MONOPOLY CAPITAL

Monopoly capital has decided to make use of the accumulating crisis factors, not to combat and overcome them, but to stimulate them and to bring them to sharper expression as a means of combatting the rising trade union movement, to block action on the progressive legislative program in Congress, to crystallize the camp of reaction, reaching into the Roosevelt ranks also.

It has decided to go to the country with a demagogic cry that Roosevelt's course is destroying prosperity and that prosperity can only be restored by relieving the rich from taxation and placing government policies in the hands of the safe and sane people of the Liberty League type, such as Glass, Landon, Hoover, etc. It is interesting to note that even the organ of reaction, such as the *Herald-Tribune,* spokesmen for the reactionary democratic groups such as General Johnson, are speaking almost openly of the present recession as a strike of capital.

Monopoly capital has gone on a sit-down strike. It is trying, by direct action, to cancel the mandate of the people of November, 1936. That is the chief significance of the economic recession occurring at this moment. This does not mean that monopoly capital can make prosperity or crisis at its own pleasure. Certainly, the cyclical crisis is inevitable over a certain number of years; it cannot be avoided so long as capitalism lasts. But monopoly capital does have an enormous destructive power. It is this destructive power which is creating a dangerous situation for labor and the masses. Only a decisive mass struggle can overcome this menace, and only an understanding of the fact that capital is on a sit-down strike will enable us to mobilize the masses to the fullest possible extent.

It is instructive to see in respect to this question how the renegade groups are rushing to the defense of capital. This week, Lovestone publishes an extended article in which he "proves" that this recession is not the fault of the capitalists at all; they could not help it, and the Communists, when we speak about the sit-down strike, are rejecting Marxian economics. The conclusion of the renegades is that Marxist economics is now on the side of Wall Street, and that the capitalists have merely fallen victims to the system. That is a perfect alibi for the capitalists and a weapon for the renegades to disarm the workers in their fight against their present main enemy.

A PROGRAM OF STRUGGLE AGAINST REACTION

Comrade Bittelman, in an article in the *Daily Worker* of October 28, published as a judgment of the Political Bureau, gave our detailed analysis of the program of struggle against the recession.

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Let me emphasize some features of this program of struggle. First of all, the government, by its policies, can influence the development of the economic situation, but all the proposals coming from reaction, all the tendencies within the administration, such as that represented by Morgenthau's speech the other day —all such tendencies as these will serve to intensify the crisis and not bring any recovery whatever. The increase of the social program of the government, the increase of public works, the increase of unemployment relief and the more strict control of finance and industry by the government are the line of governmental struggle against the threatening crisis. For the labor movement, in its extra-legislative demands on these questions, the points we have to emphasize are the necessity of the trade unions, and especially the new C.I.O. unions, to take up the struggle against unemployment, the struggle against the closing down of factories, and to begin to implement the line given by John L. Lewis in the Atlantic City meeting of the C.I.O., in which he proclaimed the right to a job of every American worker.

We must do everything in our power to secure through the trade unions, and especially through the C.I.O. unions, that they take up as an organic part of trade union activity the struggle of their members who are thrown out of the factories today; and this must be given special organizational forms within the unions.

Next, we must combat most energetically within these unions the ideology, which is especially expressed by Lovestone and other renegade elements, that now the economic recession is beginning, the advance of the trade union movement is impossible, that any idea of struggle of those still in the factories must be stopped, and that it is necessary to surrender to all demands of the employers. These treacherous ideas, which play directly into the hands of finance capital, must be systematically combatted by a more energetic struggle to protect those in the factories, combined with the systematic fight for those thrown out of work, as an organic part of trade union activities. This is the second great item necessary for the struggle against the recession.

By the way, it is of more than ordinary interest to note that President Roosevelt, in his message to the Special Session of Congress on Nov. 15, has adopted a substantially correct analysis when he declared that the underlying economic situation does not justify the present recession. We believe the President is sound on that point. The President was further quite sound, when he declared for energetic action by the government to secure reversal of this trend. It is true the President did not point out the sit-down strikes of monopoly capital and denounce them; it is true rather, that he adopted a conciliatory tone towards the sit-down strikes of finance capital, much more conciliatory than to the sit-down strikes of the workers. The President seems to hope to coax these sit-down strikers out of their holes. The more the President and members of his Cabinet wheedle and coax, the more do the economic royalists scurry and crawl and gather their forces for new attacks upon pro-

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gressive measures of the Roosevelt administration.

O'Connor's speech in the Senate yesterday constitutes one of the most rabid attacks that has ever been made upon anything progressive in the administration. The opening of Congress had been accompanied by an unprecedented barrage of reactionary propaganda for the purpose of blocking Roosevelt's program and embarking upon a clearer reactionary course. All of this is setting the stage for still more brutal attacks against the toiling masses all the way down the line by monopoly capital and reaction.

In order fully to understand this situation at the opening of Congress, we must give some attention to reviewing the last session of Congress, the defeat of the progressive legislative program there and the people's answer to this in the municipal elections in November, 1937.

In the first session of the present Congress, from January to August, the progressive legislative program sponsored by Roosevelt and the labor movement was almost entirely emasculated or defeated by a hostile majority. This majority was made up in the main of the Right-wing members of Roosevelt's own party, in open coalition with the Republicans. The mandate of the 1936 elections was sabotaged and defeated in Congress by those men who had ridden to victory in the elections on Roosevelt's coat tails.

The central issue around which reaction rallied all its forces was opposition to Roosevelt's plan of Supreme Court reform. Keeping the Landon Republicans in the background, making the renegade New Dealers their front-line fighters and presenting in the center the so-called progressive Wheeler, reaction waged a bitter fight with a clever strategy, which registered a maximum of reactionary force; they reached their main objective of temporarily defeating the court reform, and along with it the chief items of social legislation before the session.

A big effort has been made within the progressive circles to brand the court reform as a mistake, a mistake from the point of view of program, certain of defeat and of dividing the progressives. That trend carried to defeat other progressive legislation which could otherwise have been adopted. This view would have us see in the court reform plan the cause of the reactionary advance and the set-back for the cause of progress. An extreme example of this atitude is Oswald Garrison Villard, the old-time liberal, the old-time progressive, who openly joined the reactionary camp on this issue. Another example is LaGuardia. LaGuardia kept silent on the question, and although he was cited in the election campaign as having been a supporter of Roosevelt's Supreme Court proposal, he was not. He did not commit himself. He did not come out against it; but neither did he say a single word for it. The overwhelming majority vote received by the Mayor in the last elections is certainly a mandate by the people of New York that the Mayor shall come out with a more positive and energetic support of all progressive measures proposed by the President.

Norman Thomas is a special example, with his shameless parroting of the reactionary slogans against Roosevelt, his shameless newspaper

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statements against the court reform plan, which were seized upon and used by the reactionary press to the utmost, and especially by his scandalous campaign on the Black issue.

It is necessary to combat and decisively defeat this point of view among the masses, among the progressive circles; to defeat this point of view in whatever form it presents itself. It is necessary to combat and defeat it even when it is expressed by taking a defensive attitude on the court reform plan in face of these reactionary attacks, instead of replying with an offensive, an energetic struggle and propaganda for the court reform.

It is a fact, which we must establish everywhere, that the Roosevelt fight for reform of the Supreme Court remains, even in face of defeat in Congress, one of his outstanding achievements, one of the most positive contributions of permanent value in the history of our country. The Roosevelt plan correctly centered the attention of the masses on the Supreme Court as the main citadel of reaction and the chief obstacle in the way of progressive legislation. It placed the Supreme Court on the defensive before American democracy. It drastically reduced the freedom of action of the court and caused it to reverse itself by upholding minimum wage laws hitherto declared unconstitutional. Above all, it brought an issue to the fore which crystallized the class forces in the country as never before and greatly hastened the regrouping and realignment in American political life, which will bring forward the People's Front.

It was largely upon the basis of the Supreme Court issue that we found it possible in our June Central Committee meeting, when the outcome of the Congressional fight was still in doubt, to predict a fundamental realignment in American politics arising out of that fight, to welcome this realignment as progressive and to recast our tactics to fit the new situation. Surely our judgment then was not based on any guarantee that the court reform plan would win a Congressional majority, although it did emphatically assume that it would win a majority of the population in the country. We are certainly not faced with any necessity to revise our estimate. Everything that has happened has confirmed the correctness of our line. Roosevelt took up the challenge of reaction and went to the country with a series of programmatic speeches, with a trip to the Pacific Northwest to test the temper of the people.

PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT AND THE PROGRESSIVE FORCES

Four features of Roosevelt's campaign require special note: First, the speech in Roanoke, Va., before Congress adjourned, in which he gave out the slogan, "Democracy—more democracy," and in which he answered the charge of socialism against the New Deal.

> "I fear very much," the President stated, "that if certain modern Americans, who protest loudly their devotion to American ideals, were suddenly to be given a comprehensive view of the earliest American colonists and their methods of life and government, they would promptly label them Socialists. They would forget that in these pioneer settlements were all the germs of the later American Constitution."

Second is his Constitution Day Ad-

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dress, a basic programmatic speech, far in advance of anything we had ever heard before. Third, the speeches in the Northwest on Public Works and the Farmers Problems, directed to special sections of the population. And, fourth, the Chicago speech, outlining a positive peace policy. *These pronouncements of Roosevelt, when taken together, with the more concrete proposals of the C.I.O. legislative program developed in Atlantic City, on October 11, provide a rounded-out People's Front program of an advanced type.* That does not mean to say *we already have* a People's Front to realize that program. No, we have it only in a small elementary, unstable form. But the program for such a front is here.

At the Massachusetts Party Convention, September 19, four days after Roosevelt's Constitution Day Address, I dealt with the main questions of Roosevelt's speech in the following way:

"Last Friday I listened, in company with most Americans, with deepest interest and attention to the extraordinary speech of our President. There is not the slightest doubt that it expressed the deepest desires and thoughts that unite the majority of the American people against the threat from Wall Street and the Liberty League. I have no hesitation in declaring for the Communist Party and its followers that with the central thoughts and the direction of President Roosevelt's speech, we are in practical agreement, and that on such questions with which we disagree these are not questions for immediate practical solution.

"Let me make this precise by quoting from the President those thoughts with which we agree:

" 'In our generation, a new idea has come to dominate thought about government—the idea that the resources of the nation can be made to produce a far higher standard of living for the masses if only government is intelligent and energetic in giving the right direction to economic life.

" 'That idea—or more popularly that ideal—is wholly justified by the facts. It cannot be thrust aside by those who want to go back to the conditions of ten years ago or even preserve the conditions of today. It puts all forms of government to proof.'

"With this central thought of President Roosevelt's speech, we declare our heartiest agreement. With every group or person which makes this thought the guide in formulating policy, we of the Communist Party can find an ever-growing basis for common action.

"What prevents this policy from being expressed in government action, and what threatens our democratic control of government? President Roosevelt answered this question correctly as follows:

" 'We have those who really fear the majority rule of democracy, who want old forms of economic and social control to remain in a few hands. They say in their hearts: "If constitutional democracy continues to threaten our control, why should we be against the plutocratic dictatorship which would perpetuate our control?" '

"We Communists declare our full agreement with this identification of the main enemy and the form of its threat against the people.

"The President then goes on to express a fear which we believe to be without ground, with which we disagree, and which we think is already disappearing from the minds of progressive Americans. He said:

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"'And we have those who are in too much of a hurry, who are impatient at the processes of constitutional democracies, who want utopia overnight and are not sure that some vague form of proletarian dictatorship is not the quickest road to it. Both types are equally dangerous. One represents cold-blooded resolve to hold power. We have engaged in a definite, and so far successful, contest against that. The other represents a reckless resolve to seize power. Equally we are against that.'

"In these words the President himself gives the grounds for answering his own fears. The reactionary forces are dangerous because they already 'hold power,' and have a 'cold-blooded resolve' to maintain it against the majority even if it means the destruction of democracy and the establishment of a 'plutocratic dictatorship.' This is a terrific threat, for these economic royalists control the economy of the country, control a large part of the President's own party in Congress, control numerous local and state governments, and are building up private armies, vigilante movements and arsenals.

"But the impatient ones among the masses, those who want to jump to utopia overnight, can have no power except the power of large numbers, and numbers they can get only if the majority of the people should come to feel that they have been betrayed by their progressive and democratic leaders, or if these leaders should prove themselves incapable to 'produce a far higher standard of living for the masses.' Only produce constantly that higher standard of living, even show only a consistent and effective fight for it, and all fear of the impatient masses can be laid aside as unreal.

"The American masses are very patient—far too patient in fact—and the President has no real problem of holding them back. In fact, he could have advanced his program more effectively against his enemies, if he had called the masses to his assistance more consistently. Roosevelt's strength lies solely in his support among the masses, and if he sincerely wishes victory he must rely more upon it, as did Thomas Jefferson before him.

"Proletarian dictatorship can become a practical order of the day in America only if President Roosevelt's promise of a higher standard of living under the present system is defeated or betrayed. We of the Communist Party are prepared to cooperate with everybody who will help to win that higher standard of living for the masses.

"The Communist Party repudiates now as in the past all theories or proposals looking toward a forcible imposition of socialism or any utopia upon the majority of the people. We repudiate the 'reckless resolve to seize power' by any minority. If there should arise in America anything similar to the situation in Spain, where the democratic republic while repulsing the fascist invasion was stabbed in the back by the 'uncontrollable extremists' (a minority of the anarchists and the Trotskyite P.O.U.M.) then we, like our brothers of the Spanish Communist Party would be in the forefront of the struggle to suppress such 'extremists,' who are really agents of fascism, and render them harmless.

"The Communist Party represents a strong and growing force to support and help every progressive tendency

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in American political life, and in no case to distract the progressive People's Front from its fight against the main enemy, the reactionaries and fascists.

"Therefore we declare that President Roosevelt's fears of impatient ones, who want utopia overnight, who want some vague form of proletarian dictatorship—this fear is not valid, and especially is he wrong to say it is 'equally dangerous' with the threat of the economic royalists to destroy democracy.

"The proof of what I say can be found in the reception given Roosevelt's speech itself by the reactionaries and by the Communists. The Liberty Leaguers foam at the mouth with rage against the President, but we Communists welcome his speech, agree with its central thoughts, and quietly and calmly tell the President that he has nothing to fear from us, but, on the contrary, will receive our help, so long as he really tries to carry out his declared program."

The masses have responded to President Roosevelt's more developed program at least as enthusiastically as they rallied to him a year ago when at Madison Square Garden he promised them such a program in more general terms. Even some hostile newspapers have been forced to admit that Roosevelt's trip to the Northwest was a triumphant procession, with the masses turning out to demonstrate their support of the President as against his enemies. The speeches of Roosevelt's opponents in Congress do not represent the temper of the country. This was also demonstrated in the local elections held in many places this month.

A REVIEW OF THE RECENT LOCAL ELECTIONS

Let us briefly review the most significant features of the question. New York City was the focal point of the local elections. Here the Democratic Party was defeated. This was a defeat of Tammany which is one of the centers of the more vicious opposition to Roosevelt and his policies, of which Al Smith is one of the chief ruling members. It was the American Labor Party which emerged as a real factor, the same Party which supported Roosevelt in 1936 and reiterated its support during and in the present elections. The Republican Party was in the winning coalition in New York; but only at the price of accepting the candidate's platform and allies a thousand times more akin to Roosevelt than to Landon, Hamilton, Hoover and Hearst.

The victory of the American Labor Party ticket was a sign that the tide of 1936 is running stronger than ever. The American Labor Party carried through an election policy closely approximating that which the Communist Party has been urging for two years—the People's Front Policy. This victory was proof of the soundness of this policy. While New York, traditionally Democratic, was lost by the Democratic Party, the city of Buffalo, N. Y., traditionally Republican was won by the Democrats. In both cases the decisive influence was the same—the American Labor Party and Roosevelt following. The loss in the Detroit elections of the labor ticket by a vote of approximately five to three is in direct contrast to the New York victory.

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Yet in Detroit labor cast a higher proportion of the total vote than in New York; 37 per cent as against 22 per cent. But in Detroit the labor ticket did not follow the People's Front consistently, was not conceived in the beginning in the spirit of the People's Front policy. It had made a too narrow labor appeal and had allowed the slogans in the interests of the whole of the people of Detroit to be used by the reactionaries. It had even failed to unite the labor vote itself, due to the A. F. of L. spite vote for the reactionary candidates.

The Detroit vote demonstrated the very high potentiality of labor in politics but at the same time it demonstrated that a narrow trade union approach to politics is woefully inadequate for victory, that only the People's Front policy can successfully meet the needs of the day. It demonstrated also that independent political organization is an indispensable prerequisite to serious victory and that the trade unions cannot directly perform successfully the functions of a political party.

In Pittsburgh the New Deal Democratic ticket won hands down, with the support of labor in an alignment similar to that of New York, but without the independent organization of labor's forces. At the same time in the cities of Akron and Canton, Ohio, the progressive Democrats backed by Labor's Non-Partisan League were defeated. Undoubtedly one serious contributing factor in each defeat was that the candidates retreated before the Red scare and tried to do a little Red baiting on their own account. They also, in a different way from Detroit, made the fatal mistake of rejecting the People's Front policy.

It is significant to mention the campaign in Cleveland with Comrade Onda running for City Council. Comrade Onda came within 382 votes of being elected, and made a really outstanding campaign, an example to the whole Party of serious mass work, an example which should be more thoroughly studied and made available to the whole Party. One of the most serious achievements of the Ohio district has been that campaign for the City Council of Comrade Onda. It should be studied both for its strong points and for its weaknesses. If some of these weaknesses had been a little earlier foreseen and steps taken to remedy them, Comrade Onda would certainly be in the Council today.

The New Jersey state elections give the negative lessons of the impossibility of progress without an independent political organization of labor. There was little to choose between the Democratic and Republican candidates who represented machines which cooperated to keep a stranglehold on New Jersey politics. New Jersey gave a picture of what New York was like before the emergence of the American Labor Party.

Red-baiters were systematically defeated wherever they were opposed by clear-cut progressives; wherever they were opposed by those who did not themselves surrender to the Red scare. The debacle of Copeland, and after him Mahoney, in New York, was matched in Massachusetts by the defeat of Senator Sherman who, I understand, campaigned on the platform of Red-baiting stunts in the State Committee to Investigate Subversive Activities.

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POLITICAL CURRENTS IN AMERICA MOVING TOWARDS A PEOPLE'S FRONT

More clearly than ever, the political currents in America are moving in the direction of a People's Front against reaction, fascism and war; and in these election results, we have additional proof of the correctness of our strategy and tactics. Clearly, in most cities and localities the most important instrument for the next period, especially in preparing for the Congressional elections of 1938, is Labor's Non-Partisan League. Where the League is well-organized and active and has broadened its policies and functioning, there decisive progress is being made. Where it is neglected, where it is hesitant and silent, or where it operates with narrow policies and forces, in such places the reactionaries are still able to have their own way. In those states and cities where other forms than Labor's Non-Partisan League are already at work, there the best cooperative relations with the League need to be established on a national scale.

The development of Labor's Non-Partisan League is of the utmost importance in preparing for the 1938 Congressional elections. When we say 1938 elections, most people have a tendency to think that means a year from now. But unless the major work is done between now and March, the Congressional elections are going to be a failure and a victory for the reactionaries. If we are going to have a progressive victory in the Congressional elections next November, the foundation for that victory has to be laid between now and the spring—precisely during the winter months. In some states nominations have to be made in March, and in every case the work that is done during the winter is going to decide whether there will be a progressive victory or a reactionary victory.

This is a pressing, immediate question. In many places Labor's Non-Partisan League is not moving at all yet. It is the business of all labor and progressive forces to make sure that it does move. It is particularly decisive that we bend every effort to secure and guarantee this end. Everywhere we must help the movement overcome the mistake of neglecting the independent political organization of labor on the grounds that the trade unions themselves can do the political work. Experience has proved a thousand times over that this is impossible. Unity of labor, unity of all progressive forces in the People's Front, independent political organization, combined with the widest mobilization of the masses behind the legislative program of Roosevelt and the C.I.O.—these provide the means of the next great forward step.

In connection with the struggle for Roosevelt's peace policy, which I dealt with partially in the beginning, I must raise the special problem with regard to the Congress for Peace and Democracy in Pittsburgh next week. This Congress is of the most extraordinary significance, and we have the impression that in many districts it has been woefully neglected. Some districts have done excellent work, and we must say that the response to the movement generally, independent of our work, is greater than ever before. It is not too late for the com-

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rades to do very important work to strengthen this Congress in Pittsburgh. This Congress in Pittsburgh can and must become the starting point of a big forward sweep of the peace movement which will transform the American League into a mass organization and a powerful force.

One of the obstacles up to the present has been the fact that the Socialist Party and the Farmer-Labor Party and other political groupings have not become organic parts of the movement. The result has been that the Communist Party, being the only affiliated political party, has sort of stood out in the situation and has been thereby the subject of all of the attacks of our enemies who try thereby to label the American League as a Communist organization. Of course, it is not, and neither is the presence of the Communist Party as the only political party in the League, our choice, and is not the realization of our program with regard to the League.

In facing this question we have come to the conclusion to propose to the executive of the American League that at the Congress in Pittsburgh, we eliminate this question from controversy by deciding in the organization of the Congress that for the time being political organizations will have only fraternal affiliation to the League and will not be organic affiliated bodies with voting rights but with organizational rights, and that the League be based only on mass organizations that take in members without distinction as to politics.

Formally it is a step backwards in the sense that after long years spent with the League we now voluntarily remove the official participation of the Communist Party as an affiliated organization. This is only the formal side of it. The practical side will be that the Communists will be more energetic participants than ever before. Their right will be fully preserved. I think that we can depend upon our enemies to make clear to the entire country that the Communists have not been excluded from the American League.

A broad, all inclusive peace movement is a vital necessity at this time, and the action of the Party will facilitate the rapid emergence of such a movement. While this step will not create a big revolution in the League it is going to create the conditions whereby, with the proper work, the basis of the League can be rapidly and correctly extended, making it much stronger than it is at present.

TRADE UNION UNITY

A few words about the question of trade union unity and the negotiations now going on between the C.I.O. and the A. F. of L. We have dealt with this thoroughly and concretely and in a sustained fashion in our press.

The action of the C.I.O. conference in Atlantic City in accelerating these negotiations was excellently timed and well carried out. It was done with a clarity and unanimity that was a revelation to the whole country. This is particularly true of the unity question. The fact that the A. F. of L. convention, after having been a build-up for war and very little else, was forced in the last moment completely to reverse itself and demobilize, was, in itself, a tremendous victory for unity and a tremen-

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dous strengthening of the C.I.O. throughout the whole country.

The negotiations so far are on the whole good. That is, they place the issue clearly and squarely before the labor movement and before the country and they ensure a clearer line-up on the questions. That means they ensure a maximum pressure for unity and that pressure is developing. The longer the negotiations continue the more has the pressure for unity been developing in the A. F. of L. ranks, the more impossible it is for the Executive Council to break off these negotiations or to present impossible ultimata. This will probably be true for some time yet and we, therefore, must not be impatient in our demands for immediate conclusions to come out of these negotiations. The demand that negotiations must bring forward progressive results is our demand, and whatever time is necessary to achieve those progressive results can well be afforded. On the whole, on this question our slogans, our policies have again been proved 100 per cent correct, and by being correct they have registered in the life of the movement far beyond our immediate circle of influence.

III. THE HISTORIC ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY AND THE PRESENT PARTY BUILDING CAMPAIGN

Now I must say a few words about the building of the Party and its press, some aspects of which will be the subject of a special report and discussion and which I will not go into. The results of the first period of our recruiting campaign with 10,000 new members so far recorded proves the general correctness of our estimate of the possibilities, which we made in our June Plenum. But they are far from measuring up to our expectations and demands. The drive was slow in getting under way. It was only in the last four weeks that it can be said that we have involved our active members generally. This made it advisable to agree to the request of our leading districts to extend the special campaign to January. By that time the habit of recruiting as a permanent feature of Party activity should be well established and we will have some decisive results to examine. We should by January have 75,000 members and if every district will make an effort to have the dues payments improved, we should have a general average of 75 per cent dues payment.

We have uncovered a great wealth of Party builders among our members and these people have accomplished wonders. Their work must be popularized and their example used to stir the inactive ones to new life. There have been many new problems exposed in the course of the Party building campaign. I don't want to go into all of these problems at this time. But some few must be especially recognized and emphasized.

The first is that there is still not a general advance in the Party. Some of our most important districts still lag. Especially alarmingly do they lag in dues payments. This condition proves the lack of a healthy Party foundation in these districts, the lack of the preconditions for Party growth, correct relationships within the district, between the membership and leadership. There is an insufficient connection between the leading line of the Party and the organizational

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life of the Party and we must begin to put our attention to these points and secure guarantees of overcoming this.

THE "DAILY WORKER," AN INSTRUMENT OF MASS EDUCATION

The circulation and financial drive of our press lags behind the recruiting, especially circulation. Nothing can take the place of the *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker*. This is our paper, our instrument of mass education. If circulation lags behind we are crippled. All other gains stand in danger of being lost. This meeting must arrive at some understanding of how we are going to approach this question. It must decide how we can handle this problem in a serious manner. We have a political paper now of which we can justly be proud, even though we strive by all means to continue its improvement. It can reach hundreds of thousands if we do our part. It must be done.

Thousands of new members coming into our ranks are still new members, not yet securely attached to the Party, a part of its life, a permanent addition. They must be held. If we fail at this time, the whole recruiting campaign has been a loss. We will fail unless we sincerely improve the inner life of the Party units; improve the work of Party committees, raise the level of Party education, improve the quality of our leading cadres. A consistent development of inner Party democracy is the foundation for improvement on all these points. *Party democracy, responsible leadership, raising of the political level of our work—these are the keys of building the Party as the key of all successful work among the masses.* We must make more demands, more persistent demands around these lines in every district, every section of our Party.

PROBLEMS OF OUR LEADING CADRES

In this respect we must say some very serious words about the problems of our leading cadres. We must begin to draw more serious lessons from some of the experiences of our brother Party in the Soviet Union in the struggle against Trotskyite wreckers and fascist spies, and the ability of these poisonous elements to penetrate seriously in the ranks of the Party of successful proletarian dictatorship.

It gives us a much deeper understanding of the tasks that we have in the consolidation and building of leading cadres of the Party here where we are a small Party working under the tremendous pressure of the capitalist environment. We have to conduct a constant study and examination of all our leading cadres from a point of view of promoting new and strong people that can come forward in the mass work. We have to improve all leading cadres, systematically, from a point of view of correcting their mistakes, patiently helping them to overcome their weaknesses and, in the last resort, weeding out those who cannot make the grade.

There are serious problems involved in this which have to be taken up consciously and systematically by every district of our Party, as well as by the Central Committee. We must become more demanding upon everyone who pretends to occupy leading positions in such a great movement as ours. We must raise the standards,

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and the raising of these standards involves political line, and equally, it involves personal character and conduct. Every Communist leader must learn that his political line is worth exactly nothing, unless he is able to win the confidence and respect of the masses, and that is won, not only by political line, but by personal character and personal conduct.

Our Party is operating today in the midst of a great mass movement. The spotlight is on us. The slightest weaknesses are exaggerated and made use of by our enemies. And let no one think that you can separate personal from political life. You cannot do it; not in leading work in the Communist movement. We must create a much keener realization of this fact in all our members. Any manifestation of looseness or penetration into our ranks of bourgeois habits, particularly with respect to personal life, must be rooted out, because it is precisely from such things as this that the enemies recruit in our ranks. It has been an almost invariable result of examination of political degeneration that it almost always is accompanied by personal degeneration. We must begin to examine the private lives of all of our leading cadres as a necessary and unavoidable part of the guarantee of the political integrity of our Party. And this applies to everybody, from top to bottom. And to the degree that we find problems that cannot be corrected, let us know in advance that there is always a final way of guaranteeing the Party against dangers—that is, removing people from responsible positions if they cannot give us a guarantee of their ability to protect the Party, to protect its line, protect its prestige, protect its reputation among the masses. Every member of the leadership of the Party has got to contribute positively, making the Party's reputation spotless, unattackable among the masses.

In this connection we must raise once again the question of the proper political relations within the leadership—the Central Committee, the District Committees, the Section Committees—the development of real collective work, the proper attitude towards the promotion of new forces. We must raise the tradition and atmosphere of modesty in developing the leading role of our committees and their spokesmen.

These problems we have discussed many times. We know what the problems are. We know what has to be done, but we don't see always sufficient action, sufficient progress in bringing about the correct relations which guarantee the growth and health of our Party; which guarantee our Party against the alien enemy influences, which guarantee our becoming a strong mass Party.

We must again speak of these things, and we must begin to learn that where our work is not going ahead as it should, where we are not registering sufficient results, there we will usually find that the reason for it is not in objective difficulties, not in the difficulties made by our enemies from the outside, but in our own subjective weaknesses, in our own lack of systematic digging out these weaknesses, and finding a cure for them. It will be found in the liberal and tolerant approach to these weaknesses and a tendency to cover them up, and not face them. It will be found in

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that tendency to take the easy way and to find mechanical solutions. There is no mechanical solution to these problems. There is no easy answer. And the central characteristic of a Bolshevik Party which distinguishes it from all others, is the ability to face, unflinchingly, all of the weaknesses, to attack them fundamentally, to secure the guarantees that these weaknesses will be overcome.

WE MUST FACE THE PROBLEMS SHARPLY AND CLEARLY

Our Party is making great progress. We are securing a thousand proofs of the correctness of our political line, but we have not the slightest reason for self-satisfaction. We have an enormously favorable situation in which we are moving forward fairly slowly. This must make everyone of us very self-critical, must enforce upon us the lesson of modesty, must force us to constantly re-examine each one his own work and collectively our collective work. It must make us more demanding for a more decisive improvement, a more fearless facing of our weaknesses and shortcomings, and a real concerted drive of all of us together to solve our problems with the same spirit and the same method in which Comrade Stalin, in his famous speech last spring on mastering Bolshevism, stated the Communist Party of the Soviet Union is solving and facing one of its historic tasks, that of cleansing the Soviet power of all weaknesses, to prepare for the decisive world battles immediately confronting us.

We are a small Party. The Party of the Soviet Union is a very big one. We are a Party only coming to maturity. Our great Brother Party has been administering state power for 20 years. But our role is clearly responsible—and in terms of history, of world development as it will be written, if we measure up to our responsibilities, if we create such a Party as will be able to organize and mobilize the American people in the coming battles on the side of progress, democracy and peace, then we will have earned our right to speak of ourselves as a Bolshevik Party, the great Party of Lenin and Stalin.

But we must approach the problem of our Party building in the light of the tremendous tasks we have assumed, in the light of the limited time we have to accomplish them, with the knowledge of the world of enemy forces with which we are surrounded and which we have to meet and defeat not only in the mass struggles but in the very formation of the character of our Party members and leaders. We have to transform society, and we have to begin that job by transforming ourselves. We have to make the working class powerful and strong. We have to begin by making ourselves powerful and strong and immune to all the influences of a decaying capitalist society. We cannot do it unless we face these problems sharply and clearly. If we face these problems sharply and clearly, we will solve them.

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AMERICAN ORIGINS OF THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

BY WILLIAM Z. FOSTER

WHEN the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, in the summer of 1935, developed the policy of the People's Front, it marked a great turning point in international labor history. The toiling masses in the capitalist world, long demoralized by the reformist policies of the Second International, were in retreat before the onrush of fascism, then freshly victorious in Germany and Austria. The People's Front, by drawing together the fighting forces of the workers, lower middle class and poorer farmers under the leadership of the proletariat, forged a new and powerful weapon of class struggle along Leninist lines. It gave the masses new hope, a militant policy and an effective organization in their desperate struggle against fascism and war. The great fights they are making in Spain, China, France and other countries are proof that these masses in every country are at last finding in the People's Front the means to defend themselves from the fascist barbarians who would rob the people of all their democratic liberties and deluge the world with a bloodbath of war.

But enemies of the Communist Party, from Lovestoneites and Trotskyites to open defenders of capitalism, commonly argue that the People's Front is a policy alien to the masses in the U.S. They claim that its characteristic form of a united front of workers, farmers, and the lower middle class against big capital is both an ineffectual weapon and also an artificial combination of classes which has no basis in American life. They allege that the Comintern is simply trying to ram the People's Front policy down the throats of the American toiling masses.

But nothing could be further from reality. The People's Front is the central mass Leninist tactic of today, based on the natural, historic alliance of workers and middle classes of farm and city. It is no less necessary and applicable in the United States than in European countries. Moreover, the united front class grouping that constitutes the People's Front is no stranger to this country. The fact is that under the fierce pressure of advancing monopoly capitalism, carrying with it terrific exploitation and suppression of the farmers, lower middle class and working class, these three classes, for a full half century past (not to go further back into American political history), have made determined and repeated efforts to consolidate their struggle

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on the basis of the class forces which today constitute the People's Front, as against their capitalist class enemy. The People's Front has deep roots in American mass tradition.

Indeed, it can accurately be said that the American masses spontaneously developed the class combination of the People's Front even before this was done to any considerable extent in the industrial countries in Europe. In doing so, however, these antecedents of this American People's Front movement bore very much an incipient and transitory character, lacking the definite organization and ideology of the modern People's Front, such as we see it today in Spain, China, France, and in its development in the U.S.A. The history of the Farmer-Labor movement in this country is the record of the early stages of the evolving American People's Front.

The Bryan campaign of the middle nineties was a striking example of the native American tendency towards the People's Front. It was based definitely upon the characteristic class alliance of poorer farmers, petty bourgeoisie and proletariat. This great movement of the toiling masses had no elaborate theory behind it, but developed spontaneously in answer to the problems presented by the given situation. The three classes that made up its decisive forces were forced by dint of joint interests to combine themselves in a common front to resist the powerful attacks of their common enemy, finance capital. Of course, the Bryan movement was very confused in program and social perspective, the classes comprising it lacking definite organization and being deeply infected with capitalist illusions. The essential thing for us to note, however, is that its class composition was basically the same as that of the modern People's Front.

During the World War period and in the years immediately following there was also a widespread outcropping of the People's Front tendency, expressed by the formation of various state and local labor and farmer parties which entered more or less generally into cooperation with each other. One of the most outstanding examples in these years of this movement was the Non-Partisan League in the Dakotas. The Farmer-Labor Party of Minnesota represented the same tendency, but more highly developed.

A further striking example of the natural direction toward the People's Front class combination in the U.S. was given during this general period by the formation of the Farmer-Labor Party in Chicago in 1920. Prior to that convention there had been developing a whole series of local labor parties in Chicago, New York and various other cities; there were also many farmer parties growing throughout the West and Northwest; and at the same time there grew up the "Committee of 48," which had a strong mass petty-bourgeois following in many states. These three movements, without benefit of definite theory and without any "interference from Moscow," naturally combined their forces into one Farmer-Labor Party in order more effectively to fight the big capitalist interests. They had no great difficulty in arriving at a common program of demands. At the Chicago 1920 convention these three

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class affiliated groups definitely represented the People's Front in embryonic form.

The big Conference for Progressive Political Action of 1922-1924, which had some 4,000,000 organized supporters, also bore the characteristic class features of a People's Front combination of workers, farmers and middle class. It was a striking example of the constant recurrence of the People's Front trend among the American toiling masses. An important difference between the C.P.P.A. of 1922-24 and the Bryan movement of the 'nineties was that in the later organization the workers played a much more prominent part ideologically and organizationally, having in the meantime made definite strides towards winning the proletarian hegemony in the budding Farmer-Labor Party movement, a hegemony which is a central feature of the modern People's Front. The broad C.P.P.A. movement climaxed in the LaFollette presidential election campaign of 1924. And this broad alliance of workers, farmers and middle class validated once again the native urge toward the movement now in nation-wide formation—the People's Front.

Again in the election campaigns of 1932 and 1936 we see the same class forces of workers, petty bourgeoisie and farmers uniting their forces together in great masses behind Roosevelt. It is true that Roosevelt also had the support of considerable sections of middle capital and some even of big capital; but this does not change the basic fact of the crystallization, in that movement, of the class content of the modern People's Front. In the whole great mass movement in support of the New Deal the pronounced People's Front three-class line-up is unmistakable.

The above-cited incidents and movements from recent American political history give only the barest indications of the antecedent phases of the People's Front tendency in this country. The examples referred to could be multiplied and greatly elaborated upon. But skeleton as they are, they nevertheless serve to demonstrate conclusively the historical trend of American workers, farmers, petty bourgeoisie to combine together against their common enemy, big capital. The People's Front is not an artificial importation from Moscow. It has a long and legitimate American parentage. It springs naturally and spontaneously into being in the process of the American class struggle. The whole history of the American Farmer-Labor Party movement is a graphic proof that the workers, farmers and lower middle class have joint interests and that they do and can struggle shoulder to shoulder. It demonstrates conclusively that the People's Front is a natural growth, rooted in American political conditions, and that as the pressure upon the toiling masses becomes greater, the People's Front tendency among them becomes ever more definite and better organized.

Above I have stated that the People's Front tendency was more pronounced in the United States than in many European countries. In Germany, France, Austria, England, Belgium and various other countries where the Social-Democratic Parties long held mass sway they characteristically neglected to set up organized

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movements with the peasantry; and, although they had many middle class leaders, they nevertheless neglected to develop alliances with the petty bourgeoisie itself as a class. The European Socialist Parties based themselves almost exclusively on the working class and they pursued a policy of collaboration with the big bourgeoisie. They seldom or never built up the far-reaching combination of workers, farmers and petty bourgeoisie that has played such a characteristic role in American election struggles and which foreshadowed the modern People's Front. About as far as the European Socialist Party contact with these classes went was to carry out more or less fugitive parliamentary alliances with them. The one outstanding exception to this narrow policy was in Russia, where the Bolsheviks, under Lenin's leadership, systematically cultivated an alliance between the workers and the peasantry, promoting in that alliance the hegemony of the proletariat. It was this broad common front policy that enabled them finally successfully to overthrow tsarism and capitalism and to establish socialism.

Lacking faith in the capacity of the proletariat to lead all the oppressed in capitalist society, the European Social-Democratic Parties followed an opportunist line with regard to developing the class combination which now constitutes the People's Front. The Gompers Right-wing trade union bureaucracy had a similar policy in the United States, being pretty generally in opposition to this Farmer-Labor Party trend. The same was also true of the Socialist Party in this country. For the first twenty years of its history the Socialist Party was an open enemy of the Farmer-Labor Party tendency, and even now it is only a half-hearted supporter of it, as the recent New York election fight showed. And, when examined, even this "support," carried on under opposition to the People's Front, proves itself to be spurious. It is historically accurate to say that the American masses, without revolutionary theory and with socialist guidance, orientated in the direction of the People's Front in defense of their common democratic interests. It is only within recent years, since the rise of the Communist Party and especially since the Comintern's definitive formulation of the policy of the People's Front, that the traditional American Farmer-Labor Party (People's Front) tendency is receiving proper practical and theoretical support and leadership.

The gropings of the American toiling masses towards a People's Front, extended over all these years, have been characterized by a number of fundamental weaknesses. Thus, the farmers, lower middle class, and even the working class, the basic People's Front groups, have been deeply afflicted with capitalist illusions. This ideological weakness has tended to make their joint struggles transitory in character, loosely organized and confused as regards objectives. Hence, we see in the various stages of the movement such confusionism as cheap money quackery, trust-busting, isolationist pacifism, etc., mixed with many sound proposals on taxes, civil rights, etc., etc.

Because of its ideological immaturity, the developing People's Front

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combination has in the past manifested itself chiefly only at election times, after which it again tended to fall apart and to succumb more or less under the control of capitalists. A further basic weakness of the movement was the relatively feeble leading role played in it by the proletariat and its revolutionary party, the hegemony of the incipient People's Front movement, especially in its earlier stages, resting mostly in the hands of the farmers and petty bourgeoisie.

But the deepening of the world capitalist decay—with its accompanying terrific industrial crises, mass unemployment, wholesale pauperization, with fascism and war, of which the United States is feeling the deadly force—is making imperative the adoption of a solid, well-organized People's Front by the toiling masses. Whereas the traditional alliances of the workers, farmers and petty bourgeoisie in American political struggles in the past have been temporary, loose and confused, now this democratic mass movement is rapidly taking on a more definite characer. Under the blows of rapidly worsening economic conditions, the workers, farmers and petty bourgeoisie are tending more and more to free themselves from big capitalist tutelage and to unite firmly for common action in defense of their joint demands. Swiftly, their ever-recurring alliance assumes the character of a great American People's Front against fascism and war.

The workers, poorer farmers and lower petty bourgeoisie, the People's Front component classes, are rapidly becoming better organized and evidencing more of a determination to cooperate together against their common enemy, finance capital. Also, what is vitally important, the proletariat, especially as represented by its most militant mass trade union section, the C.I.O., is steadily advancing toward the necessary hegemony over this movement. Moreover, the revolutionary party of the working class, the Communist Party, in contrast with the years'-long wrong attitude of the Socialist Party toward this movement is, with increasing effectiveness, playing its role of ideological leader by pioneering the necessary immediate demand slogans and by other practical, theoretical and organizational work. In short the constantly maturing American People's Front, under the blows of intensified mass exploitation, fascism and war, is ever becoming stronger, more firmly knit, more permanent in character, and more conscious of its political aims. The great mass movement which now groups itself in support of Roosevelt is moving with giant strides towards a powerful American People's Front, whether it calls itself by that name or not.

In introducing the central tactic of the People's Front into this country, the Communist Party cultivates and strengthens the native American democratic mass movement that tends naturally towards the People's Front. Our Party's job as the vanguard of the proletariat is to make this great spontaneous movement more conscious of its role and purpose, to seize upon every situation for organizing and strengthening it, so that this movement will before long grow into the great Farmer-Labor Party, the People's Front, able to defend the democratic liberties of the people and thus to facilitate the eventual establishment of socialism.

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FASCISM MENACES MEXICO

BY HERNAN LABORDE

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THE Mexican situation is characterized by the development of the people's movement, not yet organically crystallized in the Mexican People's Front, by the national-revolutionary policy of President Cardenas; and especially, by the danger of armed rebellion of the fascist type.

The menace of a fascist invasion of South America has already made its appearance. No one should underestimate the danger arising from the establishment of a fascist dictatorship by Vargas in Brazil, the largest country in South America. Despite all his declarations to the contrary, it must be evident to all informed persons that the dictatorship of Vargas' is a fascist dictatorship brought into existence with the help of the German, Italian, and Japanese fascists. There is no doubt that this fascist dictatorship will be used by the fascist bloc of Germany, Italy and Japan to penetrate the Americas for the purpose of combatting the national independence and democratic institutions of these countries, to provoke war.

Numerous reactionary groups, "cristeros"* and fascists, representative of the interests and ideology of the larger landowners and allied—or ready for alliance—with foreign capital, have been for some time conspiring and preparing for armed struggle. The Confederation of the Middle Class, the Union of Veterans of the Revolution, the Nationalist Youth, the various groups into which the former "Golden Shirts" has divided, the Social-Democratic Party, and the militant Catholic organizations have come to understand that they cannot expect a change in Cardenas' policy; nor are they in a position to conquer power by legal, pacific means.

The government's strength, based on the masses in the Workers' Federation of Mexico (C.T.M.*), on the Mexican Peasant Federation (C.C.M.**), and on the majority of the people, is indisputable and will be more crushing as each new occasion arises. The reactionaries understand that it is fatal for them to wait. Therefore, they are intensifying their activity, extending their propaganda, and exerting themselves to unite around a leader—General Cedillo.

Furthermore, international factors play an important role in the Mexican situation. German, Italian, and Span-

* Armed bands of reactionary Catholic fanatics used by the large landowners to combat the government-sponsored progressive schools (Escuela Socialista) and to attack the peasants who take the land distributed by the government.

* Confederacion de Trabajadores de Mexico.

** Confederacion Campesina Mexicana.

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ish fascists are interested in making Mexico a base for extending their influence among the Latin-American countries and in obstructing the advance of the Mexican revolution, which is one more source of strength for the democracies on the world arena. A fascist Mexico would be an invaluable ally to the bloc of fascist powers in their preparations for a world war.

The most reactionary sectors of finance-capital, the Catholic Church, and the fascist organizations in the United States take into account that Roosevelt would find it difficult to intervene drastically in the present situation in defense of Yankee capitalist interests affected by Cardenas' policy, and that his intervention will probably continue to amount to nothing more than discreet statements and diplomatic representations.

In examining the problem of the fascist danger, the possibility must be considered of an economic depression in the United States, profoundly affecting Mexico as a country exporting raw materials for which the main market is North America. Today, already, the reactionary elements are taking advantage of the rise of prices in Mexico, due in great part to the work of monopolists, to agitate the people against Cardenas. And if the crisis comes, insidious propaganda by reaction might affect the great masses and seriously pound at the government's social base.

But the main role belongs to the agents of German, Italian, and Spanish fascism. Under the direction of the Germans, basing themselves on the embassies and powerful commercial firms, the European fascist agents have organized excellent espionage and propaganda services. They delivered to Franco the cargo of arms on the *Mar Cantabrico.* They have flooded the country with anti-Communist and anti-Semitic leaflets and pamphlets. They have known how to link themselves with certain politicians and functionaries, penetrating even the army with their subtle propaganda.

The reactionary groups in Mexico collaborate with the foreign agents and work under their direction. The newspapers of the Right, such as *Excelsior,* and the small Catholic publications are at the same time violent partisans of Hitler and Mussolini, sympathizers with Japanese imperialism, mortal enemies of the Spanish Republic, and systematic calumniators of the Mexican revolution and its government.

The audacity of some reactionary groups has gone so far as to advocate the assassination of the President of the Republic. Not being able to arouse immediately a great movement of the masses, they are already seriously discussing the utility of a terrorist attempt to sow disorder on the Left and create a situation favorable to their aims. At the same time, hoping that the conditions for undertaking a general movement will ripen, they bring in arms and war contraband, deposit them in strategic places; and organize armed groups, which are increasing now in the central states and are carrying on guerilla warfare, in the *cristero* fashion.

The leader of the Rights is already, indisputably, General Cedillo. A few months ago, when Cardenas eliminated him from the Cabinet, Cedillo

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retired to his hacienda in San Luis Potosi with an attitude of defiance and openly devoted himself to preparing the rebellion, basing himself on his corps of armed peasants, his military *colonos,* and his own air force. Cardenas reduced him temporarily to impotence, separating him from his political friends, seizing his airplanes, winning over a section of the armed peasants of San Luis, and sending new troops with dependable leaders to the state.

But Cedillo continues to be a menace. He maintains great quantities of arms and war contraband, has friends and partisans throughout the country, who, it is common knowledge, continue to smuggle arms across the Northern frontier and through the Gulf Coast. In Guatemala war materials are being concentrated with the aid of German landowners and with the complicity of General Ubico. No one is ignorant of the fact that the German fascists enjoy great influence and that Ubico is, or hopes to be, leader of the counter-revolution against Mexico in Central America.

The Mexican reactionaries are now carrying on an intense campaign in the South of the United States, in which fascist organizations, exiled bishops, and certain ex-revolutionaries like Jose Vasconcelos are participating. They are trying to create a base for the rebellion on the frontier. This undertaking has the energetic endorsement of the Catholic Church, the great trusts interested in Mexico, and the reactionary press of the U.S.

The situation would not be so serious if the Cardenas government were homogeneous and were solidly supported in the army. Unfortunately, there still remain in the government lukewarm, vacillating people who do not accept with good grace Cardenas' policy, who fear the developing people's movement, and who consider the triumph of Franco in Spain and the strengthening of fascism in Europe very probable. And there is doubtless a current of sympathy for fascism in the army, among the leaders and high officers.

In case of an armed uprising, it is certain that a part of the high command would try to drag the army along into the rebellion, and that some functionaries would be ready to betray Cardenas at the least possibility of defeat.

Because of all this, it is now urgent to intensify political education among the armed forces in order to counteract fascist propaganda and to unite the army solidly with the laboring and peasant masses and with all the people, around Cardenas. The army should be a guardian of democratic institutions and a defender of the people and the government against the threat of fascism.

At the same time, the revolutionary organizations must undertake seriously the formation and extension of the people's militia for their own defense and for armed support of the government and collaboration with its troops.

But, besides, these organizations have the right and obligation to ask of the government certain fundamental measures of foresight and defense: dissolution of the fascist groups working legally or semi-legally; drastic suppression of their propaganda; complete disarming of Cedillo's people; confiscation of the deposits of arms

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the location of which is known; seizure of Cedillo and a thorough round-up of German, Spanish, and Italian fascist agents; and purging of the government and the army.

Lastly, it should be recognized that the trade union unity achieved by the C.T.M., which is the most important factor for the unity of the people, is, still only, partial, and that the Mexican Regional Confederation of Labor (C.R.O.M.*), the General Confederation of Workers (C.G.T.**), and other lesser organizations remain outside of the C.T.M., with leaders who in the past played the game of reaction and supported Calles at the time of his fight against Cardenas.

It should be kept in mind, furthermore, that Trotsky still lies in ambush in Coyoacan, ready to meddle to the full, in keeping with his role of provocateur and splitter, allied to Mexican reaction as he is allied to world reaction. In this role he has begun to link himself with the reactionary leaders of the so-called Social-Democratic Party, such as General Antonio I. Villareal and others. Therefore, the Communist Party must persist in the struggle for consolidation of the C.T.M., for complete unity of the proletariat, against the activities of Trotsky, and for political liquidation of the little "Fourth International" group.

Such is the situation in Mexico. We must understand and make the masses understand that the central question today is the struggle against the fascist danger and that all organizational and propaganda work of the Lefts should be envisaged from this point of view. Trade union unity, unification of the proletariat, and the People's Front are necessary, above all, in order to check reactionary activities and to crush fascist rebellion, should such rebellion break out.

The working masses, the liberal, democratic, and anti-fascist elements of Mexico, the United States, Latin-America, and Europe must know that the situation in Mexico begins to look like the situation in Spain on the eve of the armed rebellion, and that everything seems to indicate that fascism is preparing to make Mexico the Spain of the American continent.

THE NATIONAL-REVOLUTIONARY POLICY OF PRESIDENT CARDENAS

The national-revolutionary policy of President Cardenas, who is being fought so much by national reaction and foreign capital, is marked by the following essential advances:

Cardenas has deepened and extended agrarian reform, handing over more land and credits to the peasants than all the previous presidents together since the beginning of the Revolution. He has modified the Agrarian Code in such a way that Article 27 of the Constitution, the basis for the agrarian reform, now has a much wider interpretation than in its first regulations. Amendments to the Code have eliminated the obstacles to the obtaining of land by the *acasillado** peons of the ranches, have made possible annulment of the maneuvers of landowners to prevent its application to their properties, have legally established the collective ex-

* Confederacion Regional Obrera Mexicana.

** Confederacion General de Trabajadores.

* Peasants attached to the manor.

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ploitation of lands by the peasants, that is, the cooperative ownership and cultivation of land by groups of peasants.

It is no longer a question of the *ejido** of 1917, which was only a morsel of ground added to the peasant's income, but of action which in some regions today totally destroys the big agrarian properties and takes the road towards transference of complete farms (including machinery, buildings, etc., as in Yucatan) to the toilers, for their cooperative ownership and management.

Our Party considers that, audaciously utilizing the margin of revolutionary activity offered by the Constitution of 1917, Cardenas is laying down in deeds the bases of a new revolutionary legality.

In the field of struggle against foreign monopolies, Cardenas has recovered great expanses of oil lands for the nation, and annuled important concessions held by foreign companies, obliging them to pay taxes they had not paid before, and taking over their lands, without distinction of nationality, in order to apportion lands to the peasants. Cardenas has already laid his hands on the holdings of the Colorado River Land Co. of Lower California, on the Jenkins sugar plantation in Puebla, on the enormous Hearst properties in Chihuahua, on the Vanderbilt properties in Sonora, etc. In this way he annuled in deeds the so-called "Cucareli agreement," by which Obregon obtained United States recognition in 1923 in exchange for a privileged position for American landholders whose lands could be expropriated only after payment of their full value.

Cardenas has supported workers' struggles against foreign companies. In the recent conflict between the Oil Workers' Trade Union and English and U.S. companies, the commission of experts named by the government presented a report which uncovered the entire mechanism by which these companies exploited the national subsoil and the Mexican workers; a report which showed the possibility for the oil workers to secure salary increases and various grants to the extent of 27 million pesos annually, and, finally, which presented the basis for a struggle for nationalizing the oil industry.

This is evidently Cardenas' orientation. Thus was promulgated the Law of Expropriation for Reasons of Public and Social Utility, which has begun to be applied together with the decree for actual nationalization of the National Railways, which are, in part, in the hands of foreign bondholders and creditors. With the aim of greatly developing the national oil and transport industries, the government has created the National Administration of Oil and Ferro-Mex (National Railways). And with the aim of developing the Mexican electrical industry, the government is furthering the building of small electric-generating plants, particularly by consumers' cooperatives, and has created the National Commission of Electricity. It also stimulates mining, transport cooperatives, etc.

The government policy comprises, furthermore, a series of measures tending to combat the semi-feudal back-

* Free land distributed by the government to the individual peasants around cities and towns.

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wardness of the republic and to raise the living standards of the people: construction of roads, railways, and irrigation systems; improvement of sanitary services; increase in schools especially in the countryside, etc. The government has acted favorably in relation to the organization and unification of the working class and peasantry, and Cardenas personally has shown himself a partisan of unity. Cardenas has also placed in discussion a special statute for employees of the state, in which rights similar to those of workers in private enterprises, including the right to organize and strike, are conceded. Likewise he has initiated action to grant women the political and civil rights of men.

This national-revolutionary program is extended to the international policy of the government. In the League of Nations, and in the Buenos Aires Peace Conference, the Mexican representatives took their stand against war, against imperialist intervention by strong governments in weak countries, for peace, for democracy, and for support to the Spanish and Chinese republics. The only inconsistency exhibited by Cardenas in this field is his inexplicable backwardness in failing to renew diplomatic relations with the U.S.S.R. and his lamentable hospitality to Trotsky.

There is no doubt that the characterization of the policy of the Mexican government as national-revolutionary is correct. But it is fitting to distinguish certain elements of this policy, which permit us to judge more exactly the character of the government, the present stage, and the perspective of the Mexican Revolution. These elements are:

First, a very special preoccupation with the organization of workers' cooperatives, which have developed and increased rapidly and which play an important part in automobile transport, coastal navigation, and in some lesser industries; and which have begun to be extended into basic industries, such as mining.

Second, the handing over of some undertakings to the workers for their administration, including railways, sugar mills, factories, and now, National Railways, the most important firm in the country, which will be administrated by the Railway Workers' Union from the beginning of the coming year.

Third, the cooperative working of the *ejidal* lands, already legalized in the latest amendments to the Agrarian Code, will be the predominant form of cultivation in some regions, as in the hemp zone of Yucatan and the cotton region of Laguna.

Fourth, the tendency to reorientate the credit system, manifested in the increase of funds destined for the *ejidos* and in the reaction of the National Labor Bank for Industrial Development, the function of which will be the development of cooperatives, of firms administrated by workers, and the industrialization of *ejidal* products.

Finally, the "Socialist School System," which, although it cannot be genuinely socialist at this period, allows the imprint on learning of a serious revolutionary—even Marxist—content, and has given a notable impetus to the education of the people. It has stimulated the rapid organization and rapid radicalization of the teachers, converting them into a tre-

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mendous force for organizing and leading the masses, especially in the countryside.

This greatly advanced policy of the Cardenas government, which is far from a workers' and peasants' government, is to be explained by the historical and social peculiarities of our country; by the tremendous and traditional upsurge of the mass struggle, particularly of the peasants for land; and by the fact that the liberal progressive bourgeoisie and petty bourgeoisie, in their struggle against foreign capital and national reaction, have had to make great concessions to the toiling masses in order to obtain their support and cooperation for the destruction of the old order of things and for the progress of the country.

It is clear that these unique elements of Cardenas' policy extraordinarily stimulate the worker-and-peasant movement, make possible the intervention of the workers in the partial handling of certain aspects of the national economy and lay the basis for the future development of the Mexican Revolution.

The essential thing is, certainly, that Mexico is tearing out and destroying the economic roots of reaction, depriving the great landowners of their strength, weakening big agrarian capitalism (to the extent to which one may speak of big capitalism in Mexico), restricting the possibilities of action by imperialist capital, improving the material and cultural life of the masses, stimulating the organization and the unity of the people, and creating the conditions for the complete national liberation of Mexico in the near future.

That Cardenas is ready to continue advancing is proved by his elimination of Cedillo from the Cabinet; by the warning given to reaction in his September 1 report to Congress, in which he said that only lack of support from the people could make him retreat; and by the final slogan of his speech, calling the people to "Unity of action, patriotic and revolutionary unity."

It is easily understandable that this revolutionary policy arouses the most violent opposition of prejudiced interests, especially of the foreign monopolies, which are most powerful. These interests, particularly the oil companies, bring pressure to bear on the government in all possible ways, trying to paralyze its business at a blow, and even threatening to leave the country. They seek to mobilize in their favor the British and United States governments and propose to organize and finance the reactionary movement now being prepared, with the help of European fascist agents.

It devolves upon the workers and anti-fascist peoples of the United States and England to stop these maneuvers and to lend energetic solidarity to the people of Mexico and their revolutionary government.

THE TASKS OF THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

It has been seen that there exists in fact in Mexico a People's Front, in that all the people's organizations, particularly the C.T.M., and including the peasant, youth and women's organizations, and naturally, the Communist Party, support the government and the National Revolutionary Party (P.N.R.). It is equally clear that the

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policy of Cardenas is a highly advanced People's Front policy.

In the last elections for deputies to the Congress, the C.T.M. and the C.C.M. joined forces with the P.N.R. and in some places presented coalition candidates. As a result, there is a People's Front Chamber of Deputies, with 22 representatives of the C.T.M. and 30 or more peasant representatives. This new blood has shown itself already in a number of actions, including the formation of a committee of struggle against fascism. For its part, the Left majority in the Senate has just set up a consultative body with representatives of the people's organizations to promote their participation in the work of the senate, and a commission intended to secure the formation of the People's Front.

The People's Front movement is developing. But it has not yet crystallized in an organic and permanent form. This relative diffusion of the Lefts gives added danger to the differences and rivalries to be observed among the Cardenistas, which have been reflected in the working class movement and which will grow sharper as the Presidential elections approach. The situation was made particularly dangerous when the Fourth National Congress of the C.T.M. divided as a result of the fight between the majority of the National Committee and the sections influenced by the Communist Party. Fortunately, at its June Plenum, the Central Committee of the Communist Party recognized a series of errors of its Political Bureau, and its share of responsibility for the division in the C.T.M., and issued the slogan—"Unity At All Costs." Consequent upon this slogan, and accepting the sacrifices it implied, the Party was an important, even decisive, factor, in the re-establishment of unity at the Fifth Council in July. The C.T.M. will go to its first regular Congress in January, 1938, united and strengthened, in a condition to undertake the struggle for complete unity of the proletariat by means of fusion with the little centers which have remained outside. The Federation will be the decisive factor for the formation of the Mexican People's Front.

The dangers inherent in the election of the new National Committee must be met by casting aside all group or personal considerations and placing in the forefront collective interest and "Unity At All Costs." In view of the dangers in the presidential campaign, the working class must act in unity with the peasants and other sections of the people, endorsing the candidate who best guarantees continuation of the revolutionary work of Cardenas. The next government, as Cardenas himself has recognized in public statements, will have to base itself on the People's Front, if it is to be a government responding to the demands of the revolution in progress.

But, what is the procedure by which to constitute at this time the Mexican People's Front? The early plans of the Communist Party and the C.T.M. for setting up the People's Front at a congress of organizations, or for achieving it by means of a united front (frente unico) pact, have failed. We must seek another road.

The Mexican situation is different from those of Spain and France. In those countries the democratic forces, separated in numerous political par-

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ties, faced the offensive of a united reaction which threatened to take power. In Mexico, the National Revolutionary Party is the party of the revolution in power and has the support of all the people's organizations. Having leadership in national politics, this party does not consider it necessary to share its power with other organizations in a united front which would place upon it determinate obligations and restrictions. Therefore, the National Revolutionary Party has been opposed to the formation of the Mexican People's Front and has in return done everything possible to strengthen the support given it by mass organizations and to absorb them transitorily in the electoral campaigns.

Under these conditions, the People's Front is possible only *within the National Revolutionary Party* (P.N.R.); that is to say, by transforming the P.N.R. into a bloc-party, in a broad united front, formed by the C.T.M., the Peasants' Federation, the Communist Party and all the organizations accepting the common program. This program could be Cardena's "Six-Year Plan" broadened and enlarged in many aspects, in conformity with the policy of Cardenas. Obliged to struggle jointly for this program and to fulfil a statute which will give unity and cohesion to the movement, the organizations will, at the same time, preserve their inner independence. Thus, there will be a genuine People's Front, only with another name and carried out in accordance with the peculiar conditions of the country.

In reality, the P.N.R. began to be transformed during the last elections when its candidates were nominated directly by assemblies of worker-and-peasant organizations. These organizations momentarily incorporated themselves into the National Revolutionary Party. The logical next step is permanent incorporation, and the transformation of the P.N.R. into a broad bloc, embracing all the organized people's forces in Mexico.

In facing this problem we must be on guard against a Leftist danger which has shown itself already in the P.N.R.—exclusion of groups of the middle class from the inside elections for nominations. This leaves the petty bourgeoisie at the mercy of fascist elements who try to convince the intellectuals, professionals, small business men, proprietors, etc., that the government of the Revolution does not concern itself with them. It is clear that the transformed P.N.R. should be the broadest possible movement, of all the people, struggling for the immediate interests of all its sectors: for the decisive defeat of national reaction, for complete abolition of the semi-feudal remnants in social and economic life, for the suppression of economic dominance by foreign capital and the development of Mexican economy, for the guaranteeing of national liberty, and for the promotion of the material and cultural progress of the Mexican people. It is a question, in brief, of supporting Cardenas and cooperating with him for the carrying out of his program.

This is today the road of the Mexican People's Front. Influential organizations and personalities in the political life of the country are beginning to understand this and will surely take the initiative. The Commu-

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nist Party will give its enthusiastic cooperation in the building of the Mexican People's Front without any thought of narrow or selfish aims, but with the single idea of strengthening the Mexican people in their struggle for national independence, for freedom, for land, and for a higher standard of living.

This section would remain incomplete if we should forget that the Mexican's People's Front, supporting Cardenas and cooperating with him, will probably face an economic crisis. It is necessary to foresee the effects of this crisis and the manner in which to arrest them. The problem is particularly difficult because Mexico lacks national industry and depends on foreign markets which absorb its production of raw materials. In historic long-range perspective, the line of conduct is clear: a plan for industrialization of the country, diversification of its agriculture, construction of its own national economy, should be elaborated. But the danger of the crisis demands adoption of concrete and immediate measures to protect the people. These measures must refer to problems of credit, official control of certain branches of the economy, extension and deepening of agrarian reform, protection and aid to workers' organizations, establishment of social security, etc.

Nor must it be forgotten that the People's Front will face a reactionary offensive which is part of the fascist offensive and its war preparations on the capitalist world arena, and that therefore the cause of the Mexican people is one with that of the Spanish People's Front and the Chinese Republic, inseparably connected with the cause of all peace-loving peoples, of all opponents of fascist aggression, of all those who are fighting for collective security against the war-makers. The Mexican People's Front owes solidarity and effective aid to the peoples who are already fighting in other parts of the world against the same enemy which in Mexico is preparing its attack.

Lastly, it should be remembered that all Central America and a great part of South America are mined by fascist propaganda, and that in the majority of these countries fascism finds a base in complicity with the reactionary governments. Therefore, the Communist Parties must lend all their cooperation to secure Latin-American trade union unity and to coordinate the democratic forces of the continent. The anti-fascist and anti-war attitude of Roosevelt will facilitate this common task which consists of grouping together all progressive elements of the American continent against fascism and war.

THE ROLE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF MEXICO

Since the struggle against Calles which ended in his downfall, the Communist Party has played an important role in events in Mexico, for the realization of trade union unity and in the creation of the conditions for the Mexican People's Front. The Party will, in the future, play an increasingly important role. Thanks to its correct political line, elaborated with the assistance of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, on the basis of the Seventh World Congress, and thanks to the rapidity and decisiveness with which

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it has known how to correct its errors (as in the case of the split in the C.T.M.), the Party is growing in political authority and numerical strength. It is correct to say, in passing, that the assistance of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the United States, and of Comrade Browder, has been highly important in helping our Party maintain a correct line and in remedying its mistakes in time.

The Communist Party of Mexico is today a national party, organized in all the states of the Republic, with more than 20,000 members—a number which will grow to at least 25,000 by the end of the year. The central organ of the Party has been transformed into a truly popular people's periodical, issuing 20,000 copies weekly and hoping to reach the figure of 30,000 by 1938.

For the first time a national Party school has been opened. The Party has succeeded in neutralizing until now the Trotskyite danger, and it can be said that Trotsky has no support among the Mexican masses. At the same time, the Party must continue to arouse all progressive people against the danger of Trotskyite conspiracies directed toward assisting the fascists and reactionaries in their schemes. The little "Fourth International" group has been expelled from the only trade union it controlled, the Construction Workers' Trade Union of the Federal District.

The Party en masse has gathered around its Central Committee, applying the slogan, "Unity At All Costs!" The Party enjoys great influence in the trade union movement. Naturally, there remain many weaknesses and failings in the work of the Party. Its organizations are not sufficiently consolidated; a middle and local leadership has not yet been formed, and the very national leadership itself has shortcomings. But the Party already has an organic base and veteran cadres tested during many years of illegal struggle. Under the present favorable conditions, and applying the correct political line and tactic of the Party, these are rooting themselves more and more solidly in the masses and will be capable of transforming the organization into a mass party of the proletariat and the people.

Our Party must recognize itself as a mass party in the course of the struggle for the People's Front, for the defeat of reaction, and for the development of the Mexican Revolution. It is highly possible that the development of our Party will continue through armed struggle against reaction, as is happening to our heroic brother Party, the Communist Party of Spain. We are sure that, with the aid of the Executive Committee of the Communist International and the Central Committee of the C.P.U.S.A. we will be able to achieve this task.

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FOR A PEOPLE'S TAX PROGRAM

BY DAVID JENNINGS

IN THE call for Congress to meet in special session, November 15, the President did not include taxation as one of the matters to be acted upon. That problem will be held over until Congress meets in regular session in January.

REACTION'S DRIVE FOR TAX REVISION

However, a new factor has come to the fore in recent weeks which is likely to compel serious consideration of taxation at this special session of Congress, leading possibly to some very highly damaging amendments to the present federal tax laws.* The darkening clouds on the business horizon, which were barely discernible at the conclusion of the preceding session of Congress, have now blackened the business outlook and threaten a repetition of the economic collapse of the early 1930's. Big business, which in the past two or three years has been clamoring to be let alone, is now besieging Washington to make the President "do something" to stave off the inevitable. Specifically, big business is asking for a radical revision of the surplus profits tax and in some of the other improvements which Congress had made in the federal corporation tax laws in the past two or three years. The threat will be used once more to stymie the Wages and Hours Bill, the one bill above all that the special session was called to enact.

At the same time, the renewal of the downward trend in employment will call a halt to the hopes of the administration that "emergency" expenditures can be reduced to negligible amounts by the end of the present year so that the budget might be balanced. Unless the decline in business of the past three or four months is sharply arrested, the winter of 1937-38 may see a repetition of the avalanche of unemployment of the winter of 1930-31.

Under this double pressure, Congress is likely to be stampeded into the enactment of two modifications of the present revenue laws, both equally dangerous. On the one hand, it is likely to undo its hard-won achievements in strengthening the corporation income tax, and, on the other, it is likely to succumb to the arguments of Senator La Follette to "broaden the base" of the federal personal income tax. Unless the progressive forces take prompt and vigorous action, Congress may do both these things under the high pressure of the economic Tories and their legislative representatives.

* The analysis made in this article has been substantially verified by the development in the Special Session of Congress.

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BACKGROUND OF THE PRESENT REVENUE LAWS

The position of the Roosevelt administration with respect to taxation has been relatively progressive, in the light of the history of federal taxation since the enactment of the personal income tax law in 1914. This position was clearly stated by the President in his first full tax message to Congress on June 19, 1935. True, he was not very specific as to ways and means. His proposals, in his own words, constituted but "a number of suggestions of important changes in our policy of taxation." But these, he explained, "were based on the broad principle that if a government is to be prudent, its taxes must produce ample revenues without discouraging enterprise; and if it is to be just, it must distribute the burden of taxes equitably"; that is, taxes must be levied "in proportion to ability to pay. . . . I do not believe," he asserted, "that our present system of taxation completely meets this test. . . . Our revenue laws have operated in many ways to the unfair advantage of the few and they have done little to prevent an unjust concentration of wealth and economic power."

This was the "soak-the-rich" message which threw the daily newspapers of the country into convulsions in mid-summer of 1935. Yet, out of it came the "Revenue Act of 1935" which failed to incorporate even the two basic suggestions of the President, namely, that Congress enact a federal inheritance tax law and that it repeal the laws that exempt from taxation incomes derived from governmental obligations—the $50,000,000,000 of tax-exempt securities.

This is what Congress did do:

The tax rates were raised slightly on personal incomes in excess of $50,000 and corporation income tax rates were changed from the flat rate of 13¾ per cent to a graduated rate running from 12½ per cent on net incomes up to $2,000 to 15 per cent on net incomes in excess of $40,000.

In addition, a 6 per cent excess profits tax was imposed on profits exceeding 10 per cent up to 15 per cent and 12 per cent on profits above 15 per cent on the declared value of corporation stock.

Corporations were permitted to deduct 90 per cent of the dividends they received from other corporations, instead of the full amount as hitherto.

The capital stock tax was increased from $1.00 per $1,000 to $1.40 per $1,000. But the corporations were given the right to declare a new value for this purpose.

Stock dividends and stock split-ups, which permit the almost indefinite over-valuation of corporation stock and whereby the bookkeeping rate of profits, on which this tax is computed, can be reduced, were not even placed in question. (The United States Supreme Court long ago had held that stock dividends were not income and therefore, not taxable.)

This was the reaction of Congress to the President's tax proposals that taxes be levied in proportion to ability to pay and possibly to prevent further "unjust concentration of wealth and economic power." It was the answer of Congress to the pleadings of Mr. Robert H. Jackson, then

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Counsel of the Bureau of Internal Revenue, that:

"Added revenue to go toward balancing the budget and toward meeting the cost of overcoming a depression which threatened rights of property should be contributed by the propertied class in proportion to their ability to pay" and that, "as we emerge from the depression, it is time to make such adjustments in the tax structure as will meet the postponed costs of protecting the social order."

THE CORPORATE SURPLUS TAX

The failure of Congress to enact a revenue law in 1935 that would provide a sufficient increase in federal taxes prompted the President to send to Congress a supplementary tax message on March 3, 1936, and to point to new sources of revenue not yet touched.

"I invite your attention," declared the President on March 3, "to a form of tax which would accomplish an important tax reform, remove two major inequalities in our tax system, and stop 'leaks' in present surtaxes. . . .

"The accumulation of surplus in corporations controlled by taxpayers with large incomes is encouraged by the present freedom of undistributed corporate income from surtaxes. . . . The shares of stockholders who can afford to leave their earnings undistributed escape certain surtaxes altogether."

This message laid the foundation for the Revenue Act of 1936. It was this act which provided for the corporate surplus tax which is now being attacked by big business. The Act of 1936 made still further changes in existing federal tax laws, but these others were of a minor nature as compared with the corporate surplus tax. This tax was a complete departure from existing tax policies, although it was by no means a new invention. As far back as 1927, a Committee of the National Tax Association proposed a flat-rate tax on the undistibuted corporation income to be "considered a premium tax paid by the corporation for its stockholders, in exchange for retaining the earnings in the business and thereby postponing the normal and surtax until a further date." The reference to the "postponement of the normal" tax was to the fact that until the enactment of the 1936 Act, dividends were exempt from the normal personal income tax of 4 per cent.

The revenue Act of 1936 changed all that. In the first place, it eliminated this exemption of dividends from the normal tax. In the second place, it provided for a graduated tax up to a maximum of 27 per cent for the amount of undistributed earnings in excess of 60 per cent of the adjusted net income. The elimination of the exemption of dividends from the normal tax would generally have tended to discourage payment of dividends. But the graduated tax on undistributed earnings tends to encourage, in fact, might compel the payment of earnings to stockholders. It is this latter feature of the Act that big business is attacking. It touched them at a spot they can least easily cover up.

The argument advanced is that the taxing of the corporate surplus prevents corporations from reinvesting their earnings into an expansion of plant and equipment, and therefore, tends to curtail employment and prosperity. Corporate surplus, it is contended, must be retained as a depres-

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sion reserve. *The fact that the existence of nearly forty billion dollars of corporate surplus in 1929 failed to prevent the onset of the depression of the 1930's seemingly escapes the minds of those who attack this tax measure.* They should perhaps he told that the very accumulation of such vast sums of reserves was one of the prime causes of the precipitation of the crisis. If these vast sums had been distributed as wages and salaries to the masses of American workers, they would not have become the dam over which the national economy was precipitated into a crisis.

The tax on corporate surplus still has another justification in a rational system of taxation. This is to be found in the need for a sound system of old-age pensions and unemployment insurance.

In the past, corporate surpluses, when they did not go to swell corporate values in the form of expanded plant, were used to pay dividends and interest on the funded debt in times of diminished or low earnings; in times when the plant was wholly or in part idle. But the workers that had participated in the creation of these surpluses were let out with no such provisions. It would seem altogether reasonable to expect that when workers became idle because the plant is idle or when because of sickness or old age they cannot participate in further production, they, too, draw on these reserves, through government taxation, as stockholders and bondholders do directly by virtue of their vested rights.

There exist, therefore, very cogent reasons why the corporation surplus tax should become a permanent feature of the federal tax system, and that it should be further strengthened. As it stands now, this law exempts from this tax banks, insurance companies and other fiduciary institutions as well as income from tax-exempt securities. This latter exemption, particularly, largely nullifies the essential purpose of the law. It makes possible the avoidance by the richest corporations of much of the tax by seeking refuge in these securities. Furthermore, it gives these richer corporations an unfair advantage over their smaller competitors, who cannot freely invest in government obligations, and enriches the larger corporations through enhancement of values of their present holdings of "governments." And, finally, it may tend to encourage the expansion of the government debt through opening up a new market for government tax-exempt issues, thereby jeopardizing any inclination to raise its "new revenues" from current taxation.

All business income, whether individual, incorporated or unincorporated, above a basic exemption to provide legitimate reserves, should, therefore, be subjected as surplus to the same rates of taxation as is personal income. Applied to corporation income, such a tax would force its distribution as dividends. Applied to unincorporated income as well as to personal business income, it would legitimately be placed on par with the tax on all earned income.

THE MISLEADING THEORY OF THE "BROADER BASE"

The second danger that threatens the progressive position of the Roosevelt administration with respect to

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taxes is the movement on foot to "broaden the base" of the federal income tax. In the midst of his testimony before the Senate Munitions Committee, Mr. John Pierpont Morgan took upon himself the patriotic duty to suggest that any efforts toward increasing taxes "must come from extending the basis for assessment to include individuals in the lower income brackets." Unfortunately some real progressives such as Senator La Follette have mistakenly adopted the specious theory that the income tax base should be broadened. This is due to the common error of treating federal taxes without consideration to state and local taxes.

The Secretary of the Treasury, Mr. Henry Morgenthau, in his address before the Academy of Political Science at the Astor Hotel in New York City on November 10, expressed the thought that "we would be applying the principle of ability to pay more justly if we were to reduce the number of consumer taxes and at the same time to increase the number of income taxpayers." In coupling the proposal to increase the number of income taxpayers with the suggestion to "reduce consumer taxes," Mr. Morgenthau, indeed, offers a method for compensating these low-bracketed income taxpayers. But the amount that is commonly expected to be raised through this inclusion in our personal income tax population of another five or six million taxpayers, runs into hundreds of millions of dollars.

To compensate the lower income classes for this additional tax burden through a reduction of consumer taxes, it will be necessary to abolish such ingrained federal taxes as customs and the excises on liquor and tobacco, for the other "consumer taxes" which are borne by the common people are those imposed by the states and local tax jurisdictions. Mr. Morgenthau can speak only for the federal government. To attempt to broaden the base of the income tax so that the federal government may tax another five or six million people without relieving them of some of the consumer taxes for states and local governments would be to impose new taxes upon those who already are carrying the major portion of the tax burden of the country.

It would be a most serious error to confine the discussion of taxation to federal taxes. The fact cannot be over-emphasized that *from two-thirds to three-fourths of the taxes that the American people pay are state and local taxes and four-fifths of these are either direct or indirect sales tax,* that is, taxes which the common people bear in extreme disproportion to their ability to pay. They are the property taxes which are passed on to the ultimate consumer in the form of rent; they are the business taxes (property and other) which the manufacturer passes on in the price of the goods he ultimately sells to the consumer; they are the sales taxes which nearly 30 states and a number of municipalities have recently imposed "to meet the emergency." Furthermore, not even as much as 40 per cent of the federal taxes are raised from the income tax, both individual and corporation, and the individual income tax which the federal government imposes already reaches families whose net income is as low as $2,500

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and single persons of $1,000 annual income.

In the plan to broaden the income tax base, it is proposed to lower the family exemptions from $2,500 to $1,500 and the exemptions of single persons from $1,000 to $750, as well as reduce the allowed deductions for minors from $400 to $200. This, it is argued, would be following the precedent set in Great Britain. This argument is most specious and must be exposed. In Great Britain, the lower income class families and individuals are for the most part free of the type of the indirect taxes which are imposed in this country.

Let us examine the following comparable figures:

PERCENTAGE OF YIELD OF THE PRINCIPAL TAXES TO TOTAL TAXES OF THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENTS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND OF THE U.S.A.*

Classification	*United States*	*Great Britain*
	(Per cent)	
Income and surtax	31.3	41.2
Customs	12.0	26.2
Excise	49.9	15.6
Death duties (and gift taxes)	4.3	12.5
Stamp taxes	2.5	3.3
Miscellaneous	—	1.2
Total	100.0	100.0

In this table we see that in the calendar year of 1933, nearly 54 per cent of the taxes of the central government of Great Britain came from taxes on income (income and death duties), while in the United States during the comparable period, the fiscal year 1933-1934, less than 35 per cent of the federal taxes came from such sources. Nearly 66 per cent during that year came from indirect taxes exclusive of the processing tax.

Furthermore, the central government of Great Britain collects 75 per cent of the country's taxes and the local governments the other 25 per cent. In the United States the federal government collects only one-third of the country's taxes, while the state and local tax jurisdictions collect the other two-thirds. The latter are almost entirely consumption taxes which bear most heavily on the common people. To broaden the income tax base in this country in conformity with the practice of Great Britain without relief from these indirect taxes, would be to place a new tax burden on the section of our population which already bears over four-fifths of the tax burden of the country.

TAX THE RICH TO BALANCE THE HUMAN BUDGET

From the foregoing it is clear that the great outcry, which has been raised by the Tories, that they cannot conduct business because they are overtaxed, is without basis. The undivided profits tax against which they storm, actually produces only $140,000,000 of revenue. When this is compared to the colossal profits that the corporations have enjoyed during the period in which the tax has been in operation, the hollowness of the Tory contention is evident.

Yet, the full force and power of the corporations and of their press, together with other agencies of publicity which they control, have been mobilized around the demand for re-

* Taken from *A Summary of the British Tax System* prepared for the Congressional Joint Committee on Internal Revenue Taxation, 1934, p. 36, U.S. fiscal year 1933-4; Great Britain, calendar year, 1933.

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peal of the undivided profits tax. The Tories have even resorted to a "strike" of capital, announcing that they would refuse to invest, refuse to operate their factories and provide employment unless their demands are met.

It is evident therefore that something more is at stake than just this tax on undivided surplus. Reaction seeks, through its campaign for downward revision of the present taxes, to prevent the upward revision which the President has demanded, which the huge profits of the economic royalists justify, and which Congress has till now failed to institute.

Intent upon discrediting the Roosevelt administration and upon realizing the objectives they sought to achieve through the election of Landon, the reactionaries are waging this campaign in order to prove that recovery cannot be achieved unless government is conducted in the interests of the rich. They seek above all to sabotage the legislative program with which the special session of Congress was summoned to deal. They want to prevent enactment now or at any time, of any real Wages and Hours Bill. They want to prevent enactment of laws that will provide governmental aid to the farmers. They want to prevent further appropriations for unemployment relief and further improvement of the present inadequate "Social Security" laws. They want to weaken the labor unions and lay the basis for repeal or emasculation of the Wagner Labor Relations Act.

As against the purpose and program of the reactionaries, it is necessary to mobilize all the labor and progressive forces of the country for the enforcement of the people's mandate which was registered in the November, 1936, elections. President Roosevelt has indicated that he recognizes what that election signifies. In his message to the Special Session of Congress, he stated:

> "We must not forget the broad central truth that this administration has pledged itself to the people of the United States to carry on with a wide social program pointed toward higher living standards and a more just distribution of the gains of civilization."

The realization of these objectives requires a united movement that will demand *higher and not lower taxes* on high incomes of corporations and individuals.

It requires that a decisive defeat be administered to those who are seeking to divert Congress from the purposes for which it was summoned in special session.

It requires a broad people's movement that will oppose the reactionary effort to wipe out the slight gains that have already been made toward legislation which will conform to the formula outlined by President Roosevelt himself, when he stated that taxes must be levied "in proportion to ability to pay." Instead of going backward as the reactionaries in Congress, including those of the President's own party would do, we must insist that Congress shall abandon the policy which results in a state of affairs that has brought the President to say:

> "Our revenue laws have operated in many ways to the unfair advantage of the few and they have done little to prevent an unjust concentration of wealth and economic power."

A broad people's struggle around the budgetary and taxation issues is

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on the order of the day. The fight must be waged for an upward revision in the tax on high incomes and corporation profits. We must demand an end to the unjustifiable exemptions now granted to the holders of more than 56 billion dollars' worth of tax-exempt securities. These holders should be required to pay proper taxes on the dividends derived from such securities. We must demand that the 90 per cent of the dividends which are now exempt shall be progressively taxed. We must likewise demand that at least the equivalent of the British rate of taxation shall be imposed upon high incomes, but that the attempt to broaden the base by taxing those whose present income is less than required for a minimum of health and decency, shall be definitely halted.

Finally, a fight must be waged in every state and locality for the repeal of the sales taxes and of the prohibitive taxes on small homes which burden the great masses who make up the low income groups.

Such a tax policy, if made the basis for immediate legislation, can provide the revenue required for the operation of necessary social legislation. Such a policy can balance the human budget as well as the government budget.

And such a policy can provide the much needed additional purchasing power which will help realize "higher living standards and a more just distribution of the gains of civilization."

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THE RUBBER WORKERS SHOW THE WAY

BY JOHN WILLIAMSON

THE eyes of all labor and of progressive people generally have been turned on Akron for the past two years. They have seen the Goodyear strike victory, the Farmer-Labor Party of 1936, the Firestone strike and the signed agreement, the unity of C.I.O. and A. F. of L. unions, the Labor Board election victories in the Goodyear and Goodrich companies, the victories of Labor's Non-Partisan League at the primaries, and now the election of four Labor Councilmen, all trade unionists, advancing the power of labor on the political scene.

The name "Akron" is associated with the rubber industry. Prior to 1935, it meant only the rubber companies and their products, wrung from the sweat of the exploited colonial peoples on the African plantations and of the Akron rubber workers in the gigantic sweatshops. But today, with labor making tremendous advances, the useful people of the industry—the rubber workers and their union—are asserting themselves.

PRESIDENT DALRYMPLE'S REPORT

The second annual convention of the United Rubber Workers of America, held in Akron on September 12-20, stood out as the most progressive, democratic, and united international convention of any C.I.O. union. The keynote of this convention was contained in the greeting to the delegates by President Dalrymple, who said:

"Labor is on the march in America, and so long as we pay no attention to false propaganda and so long as we recognize our sister and brother members as our co-workers in the plants and out of the plants, nothing is going to hinder our progress, and so long as we, the United Rubber Workers of America, receive the full cooperation from the Committee for Industrial Organization, and so long as we receive cooperation from such outstanding labor leaders as attend our convention and aid and assist us immediately upon every call for assistance, we are bound to progress. So let us not be discouraged. We are going on to a higher level in the great labor movement. . . .

"Other international unions may have their difficulties; other international unions may have dissension; the United Rubber Workers of America have their own problems to look after, and it is to the best interest of the rubber workers in America that we continue to believe in democracy, to believe in our delegates having their time on the floor to discuss every problem that comes up and that when the majority in our convention speaks, that is the mandate of our convention and the minority and the majority shall abide by the decisions. That is what we live on. That is what we strike for."

The United Rubber Workers of America, in the one year since its first annual convention, could record a growth of membership from 25,000 to 75,000; from 47 locals to 135; from seven Eastern locals to 40; from three locals in the U.S. Rubber Co. to 100 per cent organization. Seventy per

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cent of the local unions are now working under signed agreements, with the remaining 30 per cent covered by written memoranda or verbal understandings. The gains are: wage increases in every shop, seniority rights, retention of the six-hour day in the tire departments in Akron and in the U.S. Rubber Co., and a week's vacation with pay for all employees—the first time in rubber industry history. This last-named achievement of the United Rubber Workers of America has put into the pockets of its members in the U.S. Rubber Co. $1,600,000.

All this has been possible because the U.R.W.A. is on its toes in defense of the interests of the rubber workers. During the past year, it was forced to conduct more than 30 strikes to win concessions and recognition. It conducts regular propaganda work among its members as is seen by the increased circulation of its official organ from 50,000 to 85,500.

But equally important is the union's understanding of how to participate in political action. This is best shown by quoting again from President Dalrymple's report:

"We are of the opinion that the value of labor legislation, both federal and state, cannot be overestimated. We took an active part internationally and locally in support of the following bills: Wages and Hours Bill (Black-Connery Bill); the President's Supreme Court Proposal, and the Social Security Act.

"We also took an active part in securing full appropriation for the National Labor Relations Board, an appropriation to continue the Senate Civil Liberties in committee work. We vigorously opposed the Hill-Sheppard Bill.

"Reports show that our local unions have taken a very active part in state and local political and legislative affairs. We took an active part, together with many other labor organizations and Labor's Non-Partisan League, in the national campaign to reelect President Roosevelt and other federal and state candidates who, we felt, would cooperate in effecting New Deal legislation which would best serve our American people. . . .

"Until such a time as labor is able to control a political party, this is favored by the organized workers of this country."

Although this is the policy of the entire union and its national leadership, the best laboratory where this policy has borne fruit is in the city of Akron itself, where the "Big Three" (the Goodyear, Goodrich, and Firestone companies) are located. Here we have seen the United Rubber Workers of America as the backbone of everything progressive, not only in relation to economic problems affecting the union as such, but a realization that the interests of the U.R.W.A. are tied up with the interests of every other progressive force in the community. Here, we saw that after maintaining a united Central Labor Union for a year, after the splitting directives of William Green, even after the formal division, a coordinating committee is functioning between the two Central Labor Unions. It was also here that the U.R.W.A. leaders defended the Workers Alliance and helped it win victories from the W.P.A. administration. And, most important of all is the union's active participation in initiating Labor's Non-Partisan League, which swept the primaries and got four Labor Councilmen elected in a Council of ten.

All this has come about in an industry traditionally unorganized up to

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1934, save for one sporadic effort of the I.W.W. in 1912 and another, on the part of the Left-wing forces in 1924. The A. F. of L. craft union class collaboration policies nearly wrecked the newly-founded federal locals in 1934; but with the launching of the C.I.O. in 1935, the membership asserted itself that year in a Constituent Convention, defying William Green and establishing its own International on industrial union lines, and democratically electing its own officers from the shops. It is this close connection between leadership and membership and the constant vigilance of the membership on all problems, that have made this union one of the foremost in the C.I.O.

Because of the unity within the U.R.W.A. behind its International President and its Executive Board, the attention of the C.I.O. has been of the greatest assistance in organizing experience and establishing a well-functioning union.

The entire convention was dominated by progressive ideology and actions. The C.I.O. spokesmen paid tribute to the unity of the U.R.W.A., contrasting the condition in the union. They emphasized that the splendid unity in the U.R.W.A. was attributed to the leadership. The keynote of the convention was sounded on the two opening days through the speeches of both C.I.O. representatives, Philip Murray and Allan Haywood, and through the report of President Dalrymple and the greetings of the Central Labor Union President, Wilmer Tate. Three main ideas stood out: organize the unorganized into the C.I.O.; no Red baiting, and trade union unity. This met with a ready understanding and response on the part of the delegates in all their actions for the remaining weeks. Philip Murray, speaking on behalf of the C.I.O. and Steel Workers Organizing Committee declared:

"It is rather surprising to note that in states like Pennsylvania where we are now having primary elections—and the state is almost universally organized as far as steel workers are concerned—every single solitary lodge that I know of in that state has candidates for office. They are running on Labor's Non-Partisan ticket. . . .

"That is a revolutionary change. The investment put into the organization of the steel industry, if it only brought about one thing alone, the right to the exercise of their franchise without interference, was substantial enough in itself to warrant the presence of the Committee for Industrial Organization in the steel industry."

Murray was followed by Allan Haywood, associated with the U.R.W.A. in behalf of the C.I.O. and now C.I.O. director in New York City. He declared:

"You are not assembled in this convention with a slate of candidates on the unity ticket, and a slate of something else on the other. You are assembled as united people, United Rubber Workers of America, which shows that the officers of your union have won your confidence and that includes your local officers, too, and among the men in these, what we term, new groups, in a few years we will be calling you the veterans; you stand high in the councils of the Committee for Industrial Organization and among the men who stand highest in those councils is Sherman H. Dalrymple. Everyone you talk to speaks of his honesty, his vision, his stability, and his courage to deal with his membership frankly. . . .

"William Green says that the C.I.O. is dominated and run by a bunch of Reds. For your information, in New York, we have every 'ism' that was ever known in the world, and just like the American Federation of Labor, yes, we have Communists in the

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C.I.O. Nobody has said that it is illegal to be a Communist, and I am not one. We also have non-Communists in the C.I.O., and Protestants, Catholics, and Hebrews in the C.I.O., just like everybody else has. . . . We are union men and women, and we stand for the right of a worker to believe in what he pleases politically or religiously. That is what we stand for, and we resent the attempts to charge that we are Republicans, Democrats, Socialists, Communists. . . . We welcome them all as workers into our fold."

Wilmer Tate, President of the Akron Central Labor Union, declared amidst great cheering:

"I cannot imagine a more deplorable condition than men who are entrusted in the position of leadership of the American worker fighting openly against the organization of the worker. As time went on, they became more alarmed, and if possible, more wide awake, until today, these same people who have been slumbering all these years are quite wide awake, and they are out in the field, they are stealing and they are sabotaging wherever it is possible for them to do so. They condemn the organization of the Committee for Industrial Organization as being a bunch of Reds and Communists and all that sort of thing, and in that attitude or in those tactics they align themselves exactly along the side of the owners of industry and the Liberty Leaguers, and I, for one, am not going to permit myself to be aligned with that crowd." (*Standing applause and cheers.*)

WHAT CONFRONTED THE CONVENTION

The main problems facing the convention can be summarized as follows:

1. Completion of the job of organizing the unorganized, with special attention to Gadsden, Alabama, and other unorganized subsidiaries of the "Big Three."

2. Continued affiliation and collaboration with the C.I.O.

3. Striving to enact a national agreement, as far as the tire building plants are concerned, to overcome the maneuvers of the company of playing one plant against another in various cities.

4. Defense of the six-hour day in the tire building departments, and its extension through the other departments.

5. Unqualified endorsement of active participation of all locals in Labor's Non-Partisan League and collaboration with all progressive forces against fascist and vigilante movements.

6. Unqualified rejection of any attemps at Red baiting, such as spring from certain confused conservative elements exemplified by certain elements in the leadership of the Goodyear Local No. 2, in Akron.

7. A progressive attitude toward organizing Negro rubber workers and toward affording them equal rights within the union.

8. As far as the internal problems were concerned, the continuation of the policy of unity personified by President Dalrymple and demanded by the membership; an increase of the per capita to the International Executive Board to make possible the organizing of the unorganized; the establishment of District Councils to coordinate the work of the locals, but under the supervision of the International Executive; and, lastly, the enlargement of the International Executive Board to give representation to the many new locals in new and different parts of the country—avoiding any tendency of conflict between the Akron locals and the rest of the country.

All these ideas were contained in the many resolutions adopted by the

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local unions and submitted to the convention. The convention was made up overwhelmingly of delegates working in the shops. Not more than 10 per cent of the delegates were full-time officers or organizers. There were 430 votes in the convention, although some of the larger locals had not sent a full delegation. While last year the Akron locals dominated the convention overwhelmingly, this year they represented only 55 per cent of the convention.

By and large, the convention boldly faced all the problems confronting it and acted upon them accordingly. It is impossible even to mention all the progressive resolutions adopted, but reference to a few outstanding ones is necessary.

THE PRINCIPAL RESOLUTIONS

First in importance is the resolution unanimously adopted dealing with the completion of organizing the unorganized:

"*Resolved*: That this convention of the United Rubber Workers of America go on record in favor of renewed and determined efforts to make the rubber industry 100 per cent union; and be it further

"*Resolved:* That all the legal advantages afforded by the Wagner law and the recent elections in the Goodyear and Goodrich plants under the National Labor Relations Board be combined with new organizational efforts to unionize Goodyear at Gadsden, Alabama, and to extend organization to all other unorganized plants."

After a heated debate, in which even President Dalrymple expressed doubt, the convention overwhelmingly adopted a resolution on the six-hour day as follows:

"*Resolved:* That we, the delegates, do hereby instruct the officers of the International to use every effort possible to have hours of work lowered to the six-hour day and wages raised for all workers in the rubber industry, comparable to those in the Akron area; and be it further

"*Resolved:* That the International officers are urged to cooperate with other union officials in securing shorter hours of work and higher rates of pay for all workers in other industries."

The determination of the convention on the struggle against fascism and war was reflected in the following resolutions:

"*Resolved:* That this Convention urge upon all labor organizations, no matter what may be their other differences, the urgent necessity of uniting their forces in a solid front against the fascist menace, so as to crush it where it exists today and to prevent its further spread, and be it further

"*Resolved:* That the workers be encouraged to depend upon their own massed might by forming an organization to combat the Law and Order Leagues, vigilante groups, and all others which stand as a menace to the welfare of the working class and a democratic form of government."

"*Resolved:* That this convention respectfully petition President Roosevelt, in behalf of the United Rubber Workers of America, to assert the weight of the United States government in order to bring about the observance of the Kellogg Peace Pact by all nations, and to discourage the aggressor and war-making nations so as to promote and preserve the peace of the world."

The experience of the Akron rubber workers went a long way in having the following resolution on Labor's Non-Partisan League adopted unanimously:

"*Resolved:* That this U.R.W.A. convention herewith endorse Labor's Non-Partisan League and its efforts on the political field, and call upon every local union of the U.R.W.A. to cooperate in similar efforts in every locality where these local unions are situated; and be it further

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"*Resolved:* To cooperate with every progressive force on the political field in encouraging Labor's Non-Partisan League activities."

After some hesitation, as reflected in the amendments of the Resolutions Committee, the convention took a bold stand for the organizing of the Negro rubber workers, in declaring:

"*Resolved:* That local unions of the United Rubber Workers of America be urged everywhere and at all times to promote harmony, understanding and solidarity between workers regardless of race, color or creed, and to oppose each and every measure of discrimination directed against any section of the great labor movement."

The temper of the convention was further expressed, not only by adopting a resolution demanding freedom for the remaining Scottsboro boys, but by instructing the Executive Board to appropriate money for the campaign. Similar action was taken in regard to Tom Mooney. Considering the preponderance of Southern white workers at the convention, this demonstrates a decisive step forward. Be it noted that this was the first convention of the U.R.W.A. at which there were any Negro delegates. They numbered only two, a fact that still reflects the need of carrying into life the resolutions adopted.

A lengthy debate developed over the endorsement of the American Youth Congress and the sending of a delegate to its next national congress. The committee had before it many resolutions on this point, but it recommended non-concurrence, arguing that the American Youth Congress had been endorsed at the last convention, which should be sufficient. The great desire to speak against the Resolutions Committee report demonstrates to what depth the American Youth Congress has penetrated the labor and progressive movement of America. Time and again, a small group of delegates, led by Vice-President Burns and the Detroit delegation, tried to prevent endorsement of the American Youth Congress, but each time they were defeated. The discussion ended with a rejection of the Committee's Report and the adoption, by an overwhelming majority, of a resolution which called for "reaffirming its endorsement of the American Youth Congress and sending a delegate to the 1938 Convention."

Among the other significant resolutions were those pledging collaboration with the Workers Alliance, calling for the revamping of the Social Security Laws, endorsing Roosevelt's Constitution Day Speech, condemning Governor Davey for his strike-breaking activities, and deciding to organize junior unionists.

Only in the case of two resolutions did the convention divert from its general progressive line. The first concerned the voting down of a resolution which called on the convention to "go on record as endorsing the sit-down, but with the safeguard of control as to procedure." This action does not mean that the rubber workers, who made history with the sit-down strike tactic, are convinced that it is not effective. The committee contended the resolution was in violation of the constitution, which speaks against unauthorized strikes. Vice-President Burns befuddled the convention by raising the danger of the convention committing its officers and

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membership as "conspirators to violate the law." The general feeling of the rubber unionists is that the sit-down strike tactic, if properly organized and led by the union, in accord with due trade union procedure, is an effective weapon that can be used—and which actually is being used.

Later, the convention adopted a confused resolution calling for a boycott of all foreign-made goods, raising the slogan of "Buy American Goods." This was defended by certain of the progressives, including ex-Socialists. This resolution, coupled with the failure to take a stand on other burning international problems confronting the American people, reflects a fundamental weakness in the political maturity of the rubber workers, who, on domestic affairs, are an outstanding progressive force.

The discussion of the internal affairs of the union and the election of officers were dominated by the determination of the mass of the delegates for a progressive policy and for unity. The only dissenting voice, a weak one, was that of John House, President of the Goodyear Local in Akron. This was expressed by the introduction of a number of resolutions aimed at President Dalrymple and the Executive Board, all of which were either defeated or withdrawn.

The feeling of the great majority of the convention, with which the Communist delegates were in full accord, was for the re-election of the present leadership. President Dalrymple and Secretary Grillo were re-elected unanimously, but John House chose to run against the weakest of the international officers, Vice-President Burns. The vote was 321 for Burns against 94 for House. The delegates, incensed over this and other acts of House, consistently defeated House each time he ran for the Executive Board. The entire old list of officers and Executive Board members were re-elected except John House, who was replaced by L. L. Callahan, President of the Goodrich local.

Of great interest in addition to the unanimity of the vote for President Dalrymple was the vote for a number of Executive Board members who have been criticized sometime for their consistent progressivism by the more conservative members of the Board and the union. N. H. Eagle got 230 votes, defeating Buckmaster, who got 191; S. Camelio received 277 against House's 125; and J. Marchiando got 284 against 114 for Roberts. The only shortcoming in regards to the election of the union leadership is the failure to broaden out the Executive Board, to give adequate representation to the new locals developed throughout the country—and from such important plants as U. S. Rubber, or such localities as Indiana, California, or Canada.

THE CENTRAL TASKS FACING THE UNION

With such a successful and progressive convention concluded, the union has as its central tasks:

1. Really embarking on an effective campaign to conclude the organizing of the unorganized, penetrating into the South, first of all, but also into every plant of the "Big Three" not yet organized. Only in this way will the future of the rubber workers already organized be secure. Only in this way

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can the union successfully fight the decentralization policy of the company.

2. Pressing for signed agreements with all the companies, striving to establish a pattern of one common agreement nationally, at least as far as the big tire companies are concerned, as the first step towards a national agreement.

3. Following the lead of the Atlantic City C.I.O. Conference, the U.R.W.A. must concern itself with the needs and problems of all of its members at all times, especially in combatting the present policy of heavy layoffs at the well-organized plants.

4. Continuing the splendid example in Akron of helping to make the entire working class and labor union movement politically conscious, participating in the establishment of an all-embracing Labor's Non-Partisan League, wherever there is a U.R.W.A. local, and through such a united movement support all progressive measures in the struggle against reaction and fascism.

The Communist Party can be proud of the record of its members in helping to build the rubber union, as well as the conduct of those Communists who were at the convention. In contrast to last year when the Communists elected as delegates came practically exclusively from Akron, this year found Communists among the delegates from all parts of the country. The Communists in their shops and locals and at the convention have proved themselves devoted union builders, organizers, and supporters of a united union and a united union leadership. The work of the Communist Party and its leadership in Akron, has been a real contribution to establishing our Party as a firm, solid force among the rubber workers.

Out of a total of 130 resolutions there was only one anti-Communist resolution brought before the Resolutions Committee. This came from a local union in La Crosse, Wisconsin. It never reached the floor and was swamped with the grouping of resolutions. Only once in ten days was there an indication of Red-baiting, and immediately President Dalrymple—in line with the attitude of Lewis, Murray, Carey, and others—called the delegates to order, emphasizing that the convention wanted "no insinuations."

It is clear that the Party throughout the country must devote much greater time and attention to the army of progressive-minded union men and women in the rubber industry. This great union is one of the columns in the broad People's Front movement in our country. The Party branches everywhere must get acquainted with its leaders, give assistance, help build and strengthen the union, and build the Communist Party among the rubber workers.

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THE PARTY BUILDING DRIVE IN NEW YORK STATE

BY MAX STEINBERG

ON SEPTEMBER 1, the New York State Committee of the Communist Party launched simultaneously the Party Building Drive and the election campaign. Increased clarity on the part of the entire membership on the issues involved and the line of the State Committee, the clear and realistic strategy of the Party, served to promote our success in the election campaign just completed. An outstanding feature was the greater initiative displayed by our county committees in leading the membership toward a higher degree of activity. Especially does this hold true of Kings County (Brooklyn), where the greatest amount of campaigning was done both in general meetings and in canvassing.

As a result of our clear policy, we were an effective force this year in building the American Labor Party and the progressive coalition, in developing more successfully than ever before the independent campaign around our own program and our Councilmanic candidates. Our Party emerges from this election campaign as a recognized factor in the life of this great community.

We shall review the Party building drive over this period of intensive election campaigning during the months of September and October.

The July meeting of our State Committee made a number of decisions, based on which we worked out a plan for Party building. We were guided by Comrade Browder's statement at the June plenary meeting of the Central Committee in regard to planning. Our plan did not set down quotas nor offer blueprints. We advised the membership how to prepare the Party Building Drive and connect it with everyday activity; we projected socialist competition. We also undertook to raise $240,000 for the *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker,* for the election campaign, for the Party's concentration among the Negro people, for the state and county training schools, and for general agitation and propaganda work of our Party. The plan further included the building of the *Daily Worker* and *Sunday Worker* circulation, an increase in dues payments, and the improvement of attendance at unit meetings.

This plan was submitted to scores of meetings of leading Party bodies and at membership gatherings as part of the political discussions on mass work and the urgent necessity for building the Party. At all gatherings

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where the plan was submitted, it met with enthusiastic approval, and the machinery was established for putting it into life.

Thus, with the utmost understanding, determination, and enthusiasm throughout the Party, we plunged into the drive on September 1, at the same time launching the election campaign.

STATISTICS TELL A STORY

From September 1 to October 30, a period of nine weeks, we raised $91,000 in the financial drive. During the first part of September, we lagged in our weekly quotas, since we were still preparing for the drive. It was only during October that the Party got into full swing. We expect that by Lenin Memorial Day, the concluding date of the drive, the full sum will be raised. So far, only about 25 per cent or 30 per cent of our membership is engaged in the drive, but we are continuously involving greater numbers.

As to recruiting, 3,108 new members joined the Party during these nine weeks, a membership increase of 14 per cent. This applies to new members who have already been assigned to units whose receipts for books have been received by the state headquarters. We have, in addition, about 2,000 application cards of comrades not yet assigned to units. As early as in August, the month of preparation for the drive, we noted a considerable increase in recruiting, with 590 new members assigned to units, as against 342 in August, 1936, an increase of 248, or 73 per cent. In September of this year, 924 members were assigned to units, as against 596 in September, 1936, an increase of 328 or 55 per cent. In October, 2,188 were assigned, as against 575 in the same month of 1936—an increase of 1,613 or 283 per cent.

These figures indicate that the June plenum of the Central Committee, and the *immediate follow-up* by our State Committee, resulted, even in August, before the drive was launched, in heightened Party enthusiasm, creating a readiness among the membership for increasing activity in the Party Building Drive.

The average in recruiting for the two-month period is 231 new members per week in September, and 437 per week in October. But the first week in September gave us less than 200, and the last week in October, 487. This indicates that recruiting began to improve in August, increased from week to week in September, and took on greater momentum throughout October. The weekly average for the first half of November was 449—this, in spite of the fact that we had no unit meetings the first week on account of Election Day.

Of the 3,108 recruited, the percentage of Negroes increased from our past norm of approximately 7 per cent of our total to 13 per cent during the drive, a considerable improvement. The percentage of women recruits shows a slight relative decrease, which indicates certain deficiencies in this important field of work. Our trade union recruiting has improved. Before the drive began, as a result of weaknesses in our industrial units, the percentage had dropped from 58 per cent, which was considered normal, to a low of 43 per cent. During the drive, it rose to 60.2 per cent, promising

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greater increases. This, in addition to the general advance in recruiting, also reflects improvement in some of the industrial units. (The majority of them, however, still lack the necessary minimum of independent Party life and activity, because the trade union leadership participates little in them, and the section committees give insufficient guidance and assistance.)

These figures are encouraging. They show that although slow at the beginning, the drive is taking on momentum and leading to real growth. With the extension of the drive to Lenin Memorial Day, in accordance with the decision of the Central Committee, we can expect that every Party organization will attain its voluntary quota, thus making daily recruiting an inseparable part of its mass work.

Of the 2,618 members recruited in the first eight weeks of the drive, omitting the fifth week of October, 66.6 per cent were male; 33.4 per cent female; 55.5 per cent, native; 44.5 naturalized; 60.2 per cent from the trade unions; 26.1 per cent up to 25 years of age, 26.1 per cent between 25 and 30, 13.2 per cent between 31 and 35, 34.6 per cent from 36 and up. We recruited 87 of these from the marine industry; 64 from transport; 17 from shipbuilding; 24 from metal; 155 from building trades; 301 from needle; 407 from office.

While a certain increased percentage is being recruited from basic industry, the total number falls far short of the possibilities. In spite of great improvements in our mass work, we failed to concentrate with the same persistency as in the past on basic industry in building the Party. Every section must examine its concentration work and adopt special plans for improving our recruiting in the basic industries.

Of the total 3,108 recruited during this period, all of the cities upstate (outside of New York City) recruited only 156. Considering the excellent work done by our Party members in the state in building the trade union movement, this number is negligible, although it does show an increase over the months before the drive. That good recruiting upstate can be done was proven by the comrades in Binghamton, where only a small Party unit existed, and where 19 were recruited, almost doubling the membership. If we compare this to Buffalo which recruited 26, or Rochester which recruited eight, we will realize that in spite of their numerical weakness these cities are far below any reasonable expectation. The same holds true for almost every town in the state, except New York City.

Since almost all of these cities are centers of basic industry such as auto, steel, textile, etc., the county committees in Greater New York must assume much more responsibility for all of the Party tasks, exert more initiative and independence, thus permitting the State Committee to devote most of its time to the Party centers upstate.

The drive for dues payments has not reached the same improved level as recruiting, showing that it was not given the same impetus. Dues payments for the month of October total 17,128.

During the last eight months our district increased the *Daily Worker* circulation in April by 2,300, in June

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to 5,400, decreased 2,400 in July and lost an additional 1,500 in September. Thus by October we retained only 10 per cent of the gains made in the first few months of March, April and May. During October we increased our circulation by 936, thus showing an increase of 2,436 since March. This may indicate merely a pick-up in connection with the drive, or a steady increase that will continue. The Party and its leaders must unceasingly drive in the building of the *Daily Worker*.

Upon examination of some sections during September, we found that only 5 per cent of their members were involved in recruiting. We can realize here too that a small percentage was involved in the first weeks in September and undoubtedly a greater percentage than 15 per cent was involved during the last weeks in October, showing a steady improvement. Nevertheless, this is entirely too small a portion of our membership. If every one in our Party would recruit at least one new member—if even 50 per cent of our membership were involved (and they can be)—the growth would be more than three times as great.

The same weakness is noticed in phases of our other work. In Kings County, for example, where the Party conducted its best election campaign, only about 25 per cent of our membership participated in the actual campaign work. In order to achieve maximum growth during this extended period of the drive, and from then on, we must find better methods of involving the entire membership.

The basic solution to this problem lies in the unit, whose inner life and methods of work must be improved quickly if we are to take full advantage of the present situation, and realize the total value of our own ability.

Although we were able to follow Comrade Browder's advice in planning and preparing the drive, we could bring enthusiasm and open the full political perspectives only to the leading cadres of our Party. We failed to bring the plan in the same enthusiastic manner to the units and fractions, and thus involve the full membership. Clearly, the units must receive our full and careful attention as we consider the tasks of Party building.

This also brings forward the question of what role the Party leadership in the trade unions and mass organizations played in the drive. Many of the leading comrades, who had so enthusiastically responded to our plan, failed to go into their units and fractions and present the plan in the same manner. Their failure to organize the operation of the plan together with the comrades in the units is to a degree responsible for the inactive 85 per cent of our members.

We improved a little on the check and control of our plans and decisions, but not enough. While our leading fractions and section committees adopted the plan, recognizing its value, many important features were lost when presented to the units and fractions. The drive was raised there in a rather general way, not connected with the plan as a whole and with the features of socialist competition in particular. The month of October shows a great improvement over September, partly because our State Party Building Commission daily called the leading comrades from the

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fractions and section committees to check and push the drive forward more forcefully.

EXAMPLES TO LEARN FROM

Here are a few examples that show how results were obtained:

Our comrades in the fur industry were often criticized for insufficient recruiting, and correctly so, since unexploited recruiting possibilities have existed there for a long time. During the two months of the drive, despite great unemployment in the industry and the resulting lack of contact with a majority of the workers, 150 new members were recruited and assigned to units. Thus, the comrades in the fur industry made a real turn in their work, with some of the leading comrades going into the units and participating with the membership in the drive. One fur unit of 14 members, composed in the main of Greek comrades, though in existence only a few months, recruited 35 new members. In this unit, the union organizer is on the bureau and participates in the leadership; both the older, as well as the newly-recruited members, are enthusiastic builders of the union and the Party as well. It is certain that if the rest of the Party comrades in the leadership of the union would take it upon themselves to give a little bit of time to the units, the Party members would work with them in the same whole-hearted way and achieve the same results.

Or let us take two retail food clerks' units. In one, the comrades in the leadership of the union connect their tasks with those of the Party. About 50 copies of the *Daily Worker* are sold daily, there is a better Communist life in the unit, fourteen new members were recruited during the first five weeks of the drive. This unit over a long period has had almost no turnover in membership, and the dues payments of 80 per cent of the members are up to date, with the remaining 20 per cent not more than one or two months behind. This unit always has a leading comrade from the union as organizer. The other unit in this industry, in a different section, never has any political discussions, has poor meetings, a bad attendance, does not sell the *Daily Worker,* and has recruited only three members during the drive. The leadership of the union does not participate in the life of this unit; nor does the section committee give proper guidance.

We can cite more examples of shop and industrial units, as well as neighborhood branches, whose inner life has improved through assistance by the Party leadership. However, these are not the majority in our Party. Most of our units still show lack of participation of the leadership in mass work, in the life of the units; lack of ability to plan and to activize the entire membership around the plans; insufficient concentration by the section committees to build up the leadership and to develop the entire membership of the Party units to a higher political level. One member of an industrial unit frankly stated in the discussion in the State Organization-Educational Commission that only after he had been in the Party for eight months, did he get his first assignment.

Although the situation is usually

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better in the shop units, they are somewhat neglected because of concentration on trade union work and the building of industrial units.

Let us take a branch or two and see how improved unit life affects the Party's mass work and growth. Here is the Avenue C branch in the Sixth Assembly District, Manhattan, with a membership of 58 before the drive started. This branch set itself a quota of 60 to be recruited by November 15. By the first week in November, the branch already had recruited 50, 28 of whom had their books. Its financial drive quota was overfulfilled before the first period of the drive was over; it raised $850 and adopted a new quota for the remainder of the drive. Before the drive, the attendance at meetings was 25. Now the attendance is between 60 and 75. The dues payments are high. The branch is involved in mass work, especially in the Workers Alliance and in the Tenants' League. It arranged a celebration of the twentieth anniversary of the Soviet Union, which was attended by 700 people, due to good preparatory work. The executive in this branch presents the political significance of the Party campaigns, and approaches the members as Party leaders should, with full appreciation of the comrades' intelligence and willingness to fulfil tasks.

There is a good membership apparatus that follows up all members, new and old. In spite of lingering weaknesses, this branch is on the road to becoming an effective Communist organization in the neighborhood and in the entire community.

Of course, the branch is guided closely by the Assembly District Council in the Sixth Assembly District, under the able leadership of the Assembly District leader (section organizer), Comrade Bob Appel.

Or let us take a branch located in the heart of East Harlem, a poverty-stricken section. The majority of the people are Italians, with some Latin-Americans, Negroes, and a small sprinkling of Jewish people. These people are hard-hit by the present recession. That branch had 32 members, but attendance used to consist of 12. The work of the functionaries was not coordinated. The branch elected a new bureau. This bureau initiated its work by recommending that all members devote one night a week to carrying the message of the Party into the neighborhood. Now they hold open-air meetings without fail. Only rain stops them. Thus, the branch established itself, and today, whenever the section needs shock-brigaders, it appeals to this branch. Two comrades were assigned to assist in the C.I.O. organizing drive; some comrades were assigned to assist another Party branch. During the drive, this branch reached its quota of $100 and increased it to $150—this, in a poor neighborhood where money has to be collected in nickels and dimes. It recruited 22 members, bringing its total to 62. The comrades sell from 20 to 25 copies of the *Daily Worker* daily.

On Election Day they put barrels 100 feet away from the polling places and gave out leaflets urging people to vote labor and Communist. They recruited a number of members in the process. In spite of the influence of local Italian fascists, the branch made headway by canvassing people on the issue of housing, which is a vital problem in the neighborhood. The branch

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helped launch the East Harlem Tenants' League, composed mainly of Italian families. It was also instrumental in breaking down the stranglehold of Tammany, and will be a great factor in combatting the fascist influence in East Harlem.

Thus, to continue improving the recruiting drive, we must vitalize the units, bring in discussions on political subjects, activize the mass of workers and the Party leadership in the units. We must bring the whole plan of socialist competition to the entire membership of the Party and concentrate on building up independent leadership in all units.

To summarize the above facts and figures, we can see a good development, with a trend for decisive improvement, in the Party Building Drive, both in recruiting and in finances. The noted weakness lies primarily in our tendency to neglect the basic Party organization, the unit. This must be eliminated without delay in order to build our Party to the level of its political influence among the masses, and thus realize the Party's immediate organizational possibilities.

THEY SHOWED THAT IT CAN BE DONE

Has the Party the necessary forces?

Let us look at our Party Builders' Congress, held in Mecca Temple on November 14. This Congress, though organized within one week, was one of the best Party gatherings in recent years. Each of the 400 comrades present had either recruited from five new members upwards during the two months of the drive, raised over $50 for the financial campaign, or distinguished himself as a promoter of the *Daily Worker* circulation. There were also present representatives from outstanding units, from assembly districts, and from counties. The composition of our Party was reflected here: there were charter members and members who had been in the Party only two months; there were foreign-born and native comrades from shop and industrial units, from neighborhood branches, as well as representatives of various national groups. The Congress lasted all day, with not a minute that was boring. The enthusiasm rose steadily up to the concluding moment.

But do the units reflect the existing enthusiasm for the achievements of our Party, its clear and realistic strategy, its ability to work with masses and with leaders of mass movements?

It must be admitted that the unit agenda still consists too much of details and assignments that have little connection with the broad mass movements the Party is engaged in. Thus, unit meetings offer too little stimulating education and very little political leadership. Many members hesitate to accept assignments because they do not see fully the political significance of their work, and so only a small percentage of our members is involved in the fulfilment of day-to-day, detailed assignments, in the building of the Party. Sometimes we complain about the "old-timers" who do not activize themselves according to the needs of the moment; sometimes that the new younger Party members hesitate to accept assignments they are not accustomed to. But this Congress was composed of various types of comrades, all of

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whom, enthusiastic to the highest degree, were involved in mass work, in building the Party and its press.

How was this Congress conducted? We did not prepare the discussion in advance, nor designate comrades to speak on any special subject. The state secretary of the Party presented an informal review of the Party's definite advance in the recent period, outlining the tasks ahead of us, and giving a few figures on the Party Building Drive. Then came reports from the individual comrades on their mass work and how they went about recruiting eight, ten or even fifty members into our Party. They showed how easily the tasks of the Party and of recruiting can be fulfilled, contrary to the feeling often expressed in the units that assignments are terribly difficult. These comrades were able to perform their excellent recruiting and Party press building mainly because they did not consider these tasks cut off from their other activities.

The Congress also proved how fertile the ground is for Party recruiting.

Let us listen, for example, to Comrade F, a restaurant worker, who has been in the Party only two weeks. A strike had been called at his place of work. He went out on strike and joined in the picketing. He walked up and down the sidewalk ten hours a day. He did that for a number of days, and began to feel pretty weary and discouraged. At that point, the Party Section Organizer in the territory came along and asked him if he wanted some assistance in picketing. At first, not knowing who she was, he ignored her offer. The comrade, with others, came again and offered help, until finally, the striker consented and they joined him on the picket line.

Then they invited him to a little meeting at the Party headquarters where they discussed with him how further to help. The weary striker, heartened by the class solidarity of the comrades, took on new courage and militancy, until one day the Section Organizer asked him if he would join the Party. He was surprised. His first question was: "Can I join the Party just by your asking me?" In his mind, joining an organization was connected with red tape and mysterious initiation ceremonies. "Yes," was the reply, "you can join the Party just by saying 'yes.' " So he joined.

In joining the Party, this comrade states, the whole outlook changed. He no longer felt that he was a lone picket. He began to feel immediately that he was one of a big powerful army, and gained a sense of strength. In a few weeks this comrade approached a neighbor of his, a marine engineer, with whom he had discussed Communism in the past. He asked him to join the Party, and the engineer expressed the same surprise: "Can I join just by your asking me?" "Yes," he replied. "You come with me." So he took the engineer, and his wife, too, into the Party. He also got his own wife and his brother to join. After two weeks in the Party, he now states he has a few more whom he will recruit in a few days.

So speaks a comrade who is so new in the Party that he is not yet familiar with the term Section Organizer, and did not even remember her name. How does he conclude his speech? "At one time there, I was so tired I was about to abandon the job and

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leave the picket line. But now, I will never leave the picket line. I want to tell you, after I joined the Communist Party, I am like a tiger. I am going to fight!" With what natural ease this comrade recruited! No extraordinary effort. It is such enthusiasm for the Party, for the readiness of the Party to participate in the struggles of the workers, that makes the comrade able to contribute to the Party and to the discussion at the Party Builders' Congress in this short period of time. Similar discussions in units would bring this enthusiasm into the entire Party.

Then there is Comrade C in Brooklyn, a member of the painters' unit, an "old-timer" who, since he has been in the Party, recruited 300 members. Comrade C has participated in picket lines with other workers. To him, every militant worker is a contact for the Party. Thus, he approaches and recruits them.

Take a comrade from Queens, a leader in his union, who has recruited 50 members during the drive. What lessons does he bring? "I have been asked so many questions about how to do it, I feel like a magician. I am not, comrades. I think the whole thing hinges on whom we approach. Let us understand one thing—that the main and most fertile ground is in the trade unions. It has been pointed out time and time again that the masses are on the march, and if we can only understand that these people who are on the march, to a certain extent at least, are on the march toward socialism, then we wil learn how to recruit. And we have to recruit fearlessly, with no timidity. To approach people to join the Communist Party, we must do it with enthusiasm, with a gleam in our eyes, showing that we ourselves are sold on it. We have to use a method of intelligence."

Recognition of the Communist Party's role as a builder of the union, and as a revolutionary force for the building of socialism, plus enthusiasm, make this comrade an outstanding Party builder, especially noteworthy since he is a trade union leader. The hundreds of Party members, leaders of trade unions, may very well regard him as an example. He is, besides, a young comrade in the Party.

There was one comrade, 68 years old, who raise $40 during the drive. And so, comrade after comrade, young and old, stood up to report the mass work they are conducting to build the Party. None of these comrades found it hard to go out in the neighborhoods to canvass for their units and to sell the *Daily Worker*.

Discussion of these experiences, preceded by the political introduction, made this Congress a milestone in the life of our Party. As a result of that day's discussion, any assignment offered to the comrades there, no matter how difficult, would have been enthusiastically accepted and fulfilled with the greatest ease.

Can this same enthusiasm be achieved in our units? It can, if we will bring into our meetings a content similar to that of the Congress. Our Party members are active to a greater or lesser degree among the masses and must reflect this activity at unit meetings. These very Party builders must harness their energy, devotion and enthusiasm, not only as individual Party builders, but also as contributors to

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the units in the same way as they were contributors to the Congress, bringing this life and spirit into the meetings and helping other members to come forward in the same manner.

Our leading committees themselves, in order to carry out decisions made at the Ninth Convention, must discuss fully and reach complete understanding of the issues before the people. Only as a result of well-rounded political discussions should decisions be made with the leading personnel, charging individual comrades with the responsibility for carrying out these decisions. Too often now, the members of the assembly district council meet and, instead of discussing major political issues, the assembly district leader presents a list of immediate tasks which he asks the council members to convey to the units. This results in:

1. Failure to educate our leading bodies politically;

2. Lack of interest on the part of the council members;

3. Large-scale non-attendance at meetings;

4. Reliance by the leadership on council members to carry out immediate assignments which are properly the responsibility of unit executives, so that no real energetic attempt is made to develop unit leadership to whom the council decisions can be brought in a politcal manner.

What is to be done? All of our leading bodies must begin to think in terms of the political issues underlying tasks, of movements. The council members and their functionaries (organizer, educational director, etc.), must go to the units, discuss these matters with the unit leadership in the same manner, and see to it that well-planned and concise reports, embracing the political issues, are presented by the unit leaders to the membership.

As for assignments of day-to-day work, these should be given to our members outside of the unit meeting. If we have proper political discussions at our unit meetings, dealing with the major issues of the day, the Party membership will accept assignments willingly. We propose the organization of groups in each branch, based on the election district, in order to give out and follow-up assignments.. The election district captain should be a member of the branch executive and should give out the assignments that the executive as a whole has prepared for its members. He must assist the comrades in his election district during the week, so that they carry out the assignments on a high level and in a way best suited to them.

Members of industrial and shop units should be assigned to function, where they live, under the supervision of the election district captain, remaining members both of the unit and election district group. Those who cannot canvass from house to house should be assigned to a mass organization in the neighborhood. Then the cry that the neighborhood organizations are depleted of industrial workers will be answered. Every Party member will be guided by his election district captain and given the minimum assignments that he can best fulfil. Then all units of the Party —shop, industrial, and neighborhood —can devote their meetings solely to political discussion and at the same

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time work efficiently in fulfilling daily tasks. The branch and unit leadership must prepare interesting topics for discussion at the meetings, on their own initiative, and not depend so much on outlines from the district. They must establish an efficient membership, financial and organizational apparatus, composed of people who will follow up decisions and who are methodical in their work.

This wil help us greatly in the next election campaign; for, in addition to working in the unions and in the American Labor Party on an election campaign, we have to work—far more than all political parties do—in the neighborhoods. Wherever good neighborhood work is done, good results are obtained. One Section Organizer in Brooklyn, where the Party was involved fairly well in the election campaign, walked out on the street one morning and stopped thirty people. He asked them just one question: "Whom, of all the candidates running, do you remember at this moment?" And twenty-seven replied: "Cacchione" (the Communist candidate for City Council).

We must develop this kind of activity in recruiting and in future election campaigns, involving not only 25 per cent of the members, but a full 100 per cent. If we had done this in the last election campaign, what a powerful Party we would be today!

There are great struggles ahead; unemployment is on the increase; prices are going up, making conditions worse for the workers and for the people as a whole; the forces of reaction and war are organizing. As a result of our work in the past, the forces of progress were able to defeat the reactionary forces up to now. In order to defeat the present attack on the living standards of the masses, in order to defeat the anti-democratic, warmongering Liberty Leaguers, the Party must assume greater responsibility than ever before. Therefore, our tasks are greater. Let us organize ourselves to meet these tasks as Bolsheviks.

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MARXISM-LENINISM FOR SOCIETY AND SCIENCE

A YEAR OF *Science and Society:* A CRITIQUE

BY V. J. JEROME

I

SINCE the outbreak of the world economic crisis and its reflection in the deepening crisis in bourgeois science, a growing interest in Marxism has been manifest in American university circles, indeed, among professionals generally. As, under their poignant questioning, the cultural spokesmen of capital disclosed its bankruptcy, faculty members and students have evinced the desire to study Marxism at its source, to hear the authentic voice of Communism. The extensive output of Marxist-Leninist classics in English translations has facilitated this interest.

Under the impact of epic events; realizing the struggle of the two worlds; incensed at fascism's debasement of human values; aroused by the world-shaking clash of forces in Ethiopia, Spain, and China; grasping the historic meaning of the People's Front; impressed by the Soviet Peace Policy—the advances of the socialist society, the Stalinist Constitution; and responsive to the growing influence of the Communist Party, serious-minded men turn thoughtfully to Marxism. Men and women like Sidney and Beatrice Webb, Harold Laski, J. B. S. Haldane, Henry Sigerist, Paul de Kruif, George M. Soule, and the celebrated mathematician, H. Levy, epitomize that widening section of liberals and Socialists who have not closed their eyes nor stopped their ears to the world Marxist advance.

This responsiveness is naturally to be noted also among the students of American universities and high schools. Their broad popular front movement is one of the social achievements of recent years. Certainly, the action of Joseph P. Lash in resigning from the Socialist Party because of its anti-Marxian, Trotskyite-shaped position in regard to important issues of the hour, speaks honorably and representatively for wide sections of the American Student Union and the United Student Peace Committee whose National Secretary and Vice-Chairman, respectively, he is.

But the popularization of Marxism today, like its advance throughout the past ninety-odd years, does not proceed without having to clear the path of diluters and distorters. The developing interest in Marxism is, of

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course, not lost sight of by the penmen of capital, its literary forgers. They take advantage of the ready market to smuggle in between covers labelled "Marxism" their counter-revolutionary counsels. Reactionary college trustees, bourgeois publishing houses, and "liberal" weeklies, no longer able to ignore Marxism, are delighted to stock this staple—properly and dependably adulterated. Thus, mayhem on *Das Kapital* like Max Eastman's notorious *Preface* to a recent edition, is brazenly presented as "editing." Impostors like Sidney Hook are given chairs from which to teach "Marxism." Were Karl Marx to apply for the job, he would, of course, be summarily rejected.

Pseudo-Marxist academicians and writers inculcate a devitalized materialism without dialectics, scoffing at all dialectics as metaphysics. Through mechanistic, non-militant materialism, they would lead all possible followers back to a subtly disguised version of the pre-Marxian idealistic conception of history. Others would direct the course back to Hegel, standing dialectics on its head again. Still others hark back to Kant, attempting to destroy the scientific and revolutionary essence of Marxism by giving it a subjective, ethical basis, so that the lamb may lie down with the lion—on the lion's terms, and the proletariat with the bourgeoisie.

These "bookful blockheads ignorantly read" or, more often, these makers of hay while the Marxist sun shines on the market take it upon themselves to say that Marx was right *here* but not *there;* Marxism was valid *then* but now *now;* Marx the Younger, perhaps, but, ah, Marx the Elder, the sobered, bearded Marx! Some of these toplofty illuminati deign to "accept" Marx—all but his theory of value—that is, the heart of Marxism, involving, as it does, the principle of surplus value and the resistance to exploitation. As a fashionable young Marxiste who took a course with one of these professors put it: "I'm all for Marxism, you know; the only thing I haven't got round to accepting is the class struggle."

And let us not forget those others, the charitable pragmatists, who will "admit" the materialist conception of history—democratically, they would have you know, along with other, idealist, hypotheses. With an attitude of superior "Leftness," they point to their pluralistic "solution" as a decided improvement on the Marxian single-track, monistic conception of history with its lone goal of socialism, when they can leave open roads to quite a few goals—fascism not out of the chart.

(Of course, due differentiation should be made between this bourgeois pseudo-Leftness—often a conscious falsification—and the genuine Leftward movement of those students of science and history who are seeking, through the meretricious progressivism of pragmatist-instrumentalism, the answer to their problems—an answer which they will only receive as they come out of that reactionary idealist detour onto the highroad of Marxism-Leninism.)

All these tendencies have in common the denial, basically, of the objective character of the laws of development in all realms of existence, a denial of objective materiality— a lapse into subjective idealism. Ignor-

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ing the process of material production and the role of the proletariat in that process, they seek the solution of society's problems only in ideological motives. This retreat from reality is an expression of the contemporary condition of the bourgeoisie. Apprehensive of the revolutionary, socialist outcome of the capitalist contradictions, it seeks to hamper the discovery of objective truth and turns, through subjective idealistic philosophies of escape, evasion, rationalization, and obscurantism, to establish a relationship to an unreal world—a world having no inevitable socialist perspective and program.

Above all—for these people—Marxism is a new scholasticism sacred to smart salons and the precincts of universities.

That the proletariat has, shall we say, a portion in Marxism, that Marxism has something to do with bread and housing, with wages and working conditions, with the fight against fascism, with struggle and revolution and socialism—though a matter not always to be conspicuously eschewed—is, on the whole, an unpleasant intrusion.

Indeed, these constant rude interruptions by the proletariat interfere with the efforts of these philosophers to accommodate Marxism, groomed and respectabilized, to bourgeois and petty-bourgeois theories, such as the instrumentalism of Dewey, latest crusader in the cause of Trotskyism, or to the equally fashionable psychoanalysis of Freud.

Then, of course, there are the super-ultra Marxists of Socialism *now or never,* a cloak for counter-revolutionary Trotskyism.* Their poison infects certain petty-bourgeois elements whose "impatience" with the Soviet Union and the world proletariat is but a protective mask to cover their indisposition to toil for the revolution as the workers toil, by meeting practical problems in daily struggle.

Naturally, such brands of "Marxism," ideologies of reaction, leave out of reckoning—except for slander—the Party of Marxism, the Communist Party, inheritor of the proletarian Party which Marx and Engels founded in their day, political leader of the proletarian class which is the historic carrier of the Marxian objective—socialism.

These anti-Communist "Marxists" seem to say of the Communists: Let them occupy themselves with the unemployed, with strikes and demonstrations, with united fronts and other such mundane things; we will take care of the Absolute Idea of Marxism.

* * *

With such factors as these to contend with, the Marxist magazine, *Science and Society,* was launched a little over a year ago. It entered the arena with an important and complex task to perform: to help Marxward moving students and intellectuals to come closer to Marxism-Leninism; to bring Communist thought into academic circles and to develop contributors from these circles; to stimulate the study of Marxism-Leninism by demonstrating the integration of Communist theory and practice with

* A clique of such Trotskyite-Lovestonite renegades have banded together to publish a so-called *Marxist Quarterly,* whose only effect can be to denature Marxism in the interests of impeding progressive action.

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American social life; to apply the dialectic-materialist analysis to the natural and social sciences, and to cultural processes as a whole.

It is thus encouraging to note that a group of university men and women have established a magazine whose purpose is the dissemination and extension of Marxian learning.

It is not to be expected that every one of the writers should adopt wholly the Marxist-Leninist world view. Neither can it be expected that those contributors setting out sincerely to write as Marxists, should, from the beginning, treat their topics without occasional and minor theoretical misconception.

The editors of such a magazine, however, have the important task of Marxist-Leninist study, in order to deepen their own understanding and provide leadership. Proceeding from the principle that Marxism is *revolutionary Marxism,* that it must continue to affirm its scientific theory and practice through unceasing struggle against open opponents and subtle perverters, their task is to help their readers overcome college-fostered misconceptions of Communism; depart from idealistic notions of history and from stultifying mechanical materialism; give up, in the face of objective truth, all remaining traces of the liberalistic "both-sides-of-the-question" attitude; throw overboard the treacherous bourgeois instrumentalism; and realize their full role in the movement to achieve the Marxist-Leninist objectives.

This magazine of Marxian scholarship can refute the notion that theory may in any way be scientific apart from practice; it can fuse learning with the vital flow of action. It can present the proletarian revolution and the Soviet socialist system, not as an "experiment" . . . "purely Russian," but as the inevitable outcome of the class struggle, with international significance and application. It can demonstrate that Marxism for academic circles is in no way academic Marxism; that it is not a pacific, scholastic affair, but a scientific, revolutionary weapon to fight a war and win it. *Science and Society* has the task of leading through understanding to participation; of so implanting the principles of Marxism as to make hateful all that is destructive of progressive humanity—fascism and its agents, the fascist-linked Trotskyites and Bukharinites.

It is from Marx we inherit the quality of fierce partisanship rising from objective historic analysis; his writings live today not as disembodied, cold philosophy, but, because of their intense scientific objectivity, bright with the fires of hate for the oppressors, which is but the other aspect of love for the working class and its vanguard.

Inculcation of such qualities should be embodied, it stands to reason, in a form suitable to the character of a magazine, which, though not an organ of the Communist Party, is designed to be "a vital center for Marxian scholarship." We agree with the statement in the preamble to the first issue that "Marxism integrates the various scientific disciplines and illuminates the interdependence of science and society," and with the terms of the further statement: "Studies in the fields of natural and social sciences, even the most techni-

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cal and specialized, will be brought into the focus of a world movement against reaction and obscurantism."

Naturally, the approach of the magazine should be correlated to its specific purposes, to its specific audience—a specialized, scholarly approach for performing most effectively *in its own field* the basic tasks of Marxism.

In this light, let us examine a year of *Science and Society.*

II

The writers are drawn from American and British universities, permitting a valuable exchange and tending to make the magazine significantly representative of the best in the academic world in the two English-speaking countries. Undoubtedly a number of these writers will, through their participation in this magazine, come closer to Communist thought and find definitive values which will illuminate their own fields of endeavor.

One is impressed with the fact that this magazine is extending American scholarship by its application of Marxist analysis to a variety of spheres of science and social thought. We find in the four issues under survey analytical essays on a range of topics, including philosophy, mathematics, linguistics, law, economics, religion, psychology, biography, American history, literary criticism, and foreign politics. The explorations of new fields with the Marxist projector is in itself to be greatly welcomed and deserves wide encouragement.

It is obviously not possible to deal here with all the articles, or exhaustively with any one of them. Our purpose will be rather to discuss the general achievements of the magazine in relation to its objectives.

* * *

One of the most important contributions is V. J. McGill's "An Evaluation of Logical Postivism." * A polemic against the currently widespread vogue of subjective idealism and mechanistic materialism in American and European universities, the article is a competent refutation of the arguments for neo-Berkelyan sensationalism. It exposes the agnostic, anti-scientific outcome of the rejection of the objective material world. By destroying the position of mechanistic "reduction," which attempts to reduce laws of society to those of the physical sciences (thus denying qualitatively different realms of material existence and their qualitatively different laws of motion) McGill takes the ground from under contentions like those of Neurath that the physicalism of the logical positivists is a development of Marxism. The refutation, it is shown, is valid in regard to the logical positivists, even though they maintain only the possibility of the reduction of the *terms* of the social sciences to those of physical sciences. McGill's discussion, effectively conducted in the main, is very timely. Where the article is at its best it reveals the author's close study of Marxist-Leninist classics as well as of recent discussions in the Soviet Union of the questions he treats.

In one or two places, however, the article tends to weaken in the attack, as in the statement in relation to Carnap's "naive realism" (p. 77):

* Issue No. 1.

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"Thus the newest phase of Logical Positivism is, so far as it goes, almost as realistic as the Marxist could desire." Compare this with the following (p. 78): "Unfortunately, Logical Positivism, by its disregard of the material basis of our judgments, leaves the door open to idealism, religion, and apologetics. . . ."

Clearly, if there is anything realistic in this realism, it can only be credited to a progressive renunciation of the non-tenable positions of logical positivism, and in no sense to a "new phase" in that idealistic school.

This obvious abatement of McGill's attack can be traced to the absence of an adequate analysis of the class basis of logical positivism. Were this basis made clear, the social implications and dangers of this philosophic trend would be brought out more explicitly. The high-titled metaphysical medley would be laid bare as the embroidered poverty of bourgeois philosophy. The pretentions made in its behalf would be exposed as the rationalizing logistics of a social order that has long lost its reason for being, as strained efforts to escape the inevitable scientific implications of the living philosophy of Marxism-Leninism. Had this been done, the essay would not have closed with this happy ending:

"It is not, however, beyond reason to expect that when the difficulties of their position become even more apparent than at present, the logical positivists will themselves command the retreat back to the earliest philosophy, the philosophy of science and common sense. If history and economic considerations are allowed their proper place, this trend which we forecast and which has already advanced part-way, will culminate in dialectical materialism."

Obviously, this ending is brought in to salve the wounds that may have been inflicted in the course of the polemic. All very well, when the method can be profitably used. But in this case, more is lost than gained by holding out the improbable probability of a "trend" among the logical positivists, *as a school,* which "will culminate in dialectical materialism" —a probability which could not have suggested itself to the author of this stimulating and useful article, had he set himself to bring out clearly the bourgeois class roots and class services of logical positivism.

* * *

The article, "Concerning Mathematics," * devoted mainly to a discussion of the role of mathematics as a factor in the development of productive forces, shows its author, D. J. Struik, to be well grounded in materialist dialectics. It is gratifying to come upon passages of which this is representative:

"It began to look as if mathematics had turned into a science divorced from practice, a science to be studied for its own sake alone, a science spun out of the mind without any reference to the external world. What really happened, however, was that mathematics went into deeper abstractions in order to become more concrete. It could only fulfill its task of finding deeper truths in objective reality by establishing itself as a 'pure' science, and developing itself by the power of its own logic." (Page 86.)

Equally effective is the succinct explanation of the transition to abstraction in mathematics in relation to the specific movement of social and economic forces (page 88). One is impressed, too, with the analysis of the direct socio-economic connection of

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mathematics in early nineteenth century France with the conditions following the French Revolution, as contrasted to the detached mathematics of the Germans of the same period, clearly shown to be due to the slow development of bourgeois economy in Germany and to the condition of the German thinkers, exiled, cut off from their base.

Struik brings out the very important and too-often neglected principle of dialectic causality:

> "The social causality is dialectical; it works in an infinite network of canals, leading from the broad base of economic conditions to a specific effect, and from this effect back to its specific influence on the cause The ways in which it works must always be investigated anew in each special case." (Page 89.)

This principle, emphasized in the writings of the founders of Marxism, is decisive for the understanding of the dialectic interaction between economic structure and mathematical superstructure, *viz.*, that while the economic base is the ultimately decisive factor in history, it is not the sole factor.

Here, it seems, Struik had a beautiful opportunity to enhance his contribution through a more concrete application of this principle. Had he presented his thesis less as formal exposition and more through the method of polemics, he would inevitably have dealt in a specific way with vulgar economic determinism which leaves out of the relationship of structure and superstructure the rich, multiplex interaction between the economic foundation and the forms of social consciousnes, as well as the mutual interplay between the superstructures themselves. He could even have extended his discussion to an expose of the pseudo-scientific attempts of instrumentalists to adapt Marxism to bourgeois interests by reading into it a pluralism of undiscriminated factors, a denial of the monistic conception of history and a reinvocation of idealist notions. This generally excellent article could have become the accomplished Marxian essay its author was decided qualified to make it had he seized the opportunity to elaborate the principle of dialectical causality in polemic battle against the distorters of Marxism in the realm of mathematics.

* * *

We come now to Margaret Schlauch's extremely enlightening treatise, "The Social Basis of Linguistics" *—a pioneer Marxian contribution by an American philologist. Of particular political importance is the author's effective refutation of the notion of "innately inferior languages," which is a convenient "thesis" of the fascist race "theoreticians."

This article has a sequel, in the second issue, devoted to a discussion of recent Soviet studies in linguistics. Of especial interests here is the account of the transformation of linguistic structure in certain retarded national cultures, as the people advance in reliance upon their own awakened power.

One would like to say to American scientists who are still removed from the viewpoint of dialectical materialism: Study these articles of Schlauch, Struik, and McGill, and convince yourselves—though you may be working in fields seemingly remote from

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the socio-economic sphere—as to the possibilities of fresh and luminous investigation, if you will but use the key of Marxism.

Among the communications in the first issue we have S. Diamond's "The Coordination of Emil Jaensch." This is an excellent contribution, exposing the Gleichschaltung of science by the Hitler regime, and demonstrating indisputably how Jaensch reordered his psychological findings to suit the exactions of Nazi race theories.

A particularly valuable communication is Bernhard Stern's "A Note on Comte," which should be helpful in combatting the influence of latter-day positivism. One finishes this article wishing that the author might give us a full-length evaluation of Comte and the neo-positivists.

* * *

Richard Enmale's scholarly article, "Interpretations of the American Civil War," which opens the second issue, is a presentation, in brief, of some aspects of the support which Marx and Engels and the movement they led accorded to the second American Revolution. Due emphasis is given here to the role of the still unstratified American working class in bringing that historic conflict to a triumphant conclusion, and the strong position taken by the English proletariat, under the guidance of the First International, in preventing its ruling class from coming to the aid of the Confederate forces—factors systematically glossed over by bourgeois historians.

The article concludes fittingly that the forthcoming publication of the writings of Marx and Engels on the American Civil War* "serves the twofold purpose of reorientating American historical literature on the Civil War and of reviving the revolutionary heritage of that struggle."

Two articles closely related to the foregoing are James S. Allen's "The Struggle for Land During the Reconstruction Period" (Issue No. 3) and Herbert Apotheker's "American Negro Slave Revolts" (Issue No. 4).

Allen's article, embodying valuable material and giving evidence of profound research, maps the course eventuating in the betrayal of the Negro masses on the interlinked issues of land and democracy by the Northern bourgeoisie in the years immediately following the Civil War. With a scholarly wealth of documented illustrations Allen proves his well-argued thesis that counter-revolution's triumph was signalized in an alliance between bourgeoisie and land-owning aristocracy, that "two years of petty-bourgeois vacillation in the North, typified by the unholy alliance of President Johnson with the Bourbons, had permitted the former slave-owners to retain their plantations and to regain those which had been confiscated," while the Negro masses were forced to bear the consequences of this betrayal: "Slowly and with great difficulty, the Negroes were forced back upon the plantations under labor contracts or as tenants and sharecroppers."

The article constitutes excellent source material for organizers as well as historians.

* Since published under the title, *The Civil War in the United States*, by Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, International Publishers, New York.

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Although the paper is an advance chapter of the just-published book, *Reconstruction—the Battle for Democracy,** and, therefore, in the author's eyes, to be read in the light of later chapters, it would have been well—and this is a thing for writers and editors to remember in similar instances—to have added enough anticipation of later struggles culminating in the present Negro national liberation movement, to avoid the appearance of final defeat.

* * *

All too scant is the existing literature bringing forward the revolutionary and militant heritage of the Negro people. Bourgeois historians systematically perpetuate the myth of the docile slave. Even our own writers have barely begun to delve into the rich and prophetic revolutionary traditions of the Negro masses.

Herbert Apotheker's study, "American Negro Slave Revolts," contributes toward meeting this need. It contains excellent factual material on persistent revolutionary attempts from 1670 to 1865. The author is to be commended for the painstaking research involved in going to hitherto unknown original sources.

But this exceedingly useful paper suffers from the serious weakness of almost complete absence of interpretation. The author thus misses the opportunity to give historic relation and significance to facts presented in such scholarly array.

* * *

Sustaining the high plane of most of the preceding papers, Leo Roberts' contribution, "The Meaning of Change in Contemporary Philosophy,"* launches a criticism of the idealistic trend in contemporary bourgeois philosophy, known as Emergent Evolution. The article exposes the spurious evolutionism of Samuel Alexander and Lloyd Morgan which, in Roberts' words, represents "not a science but a theology of time." The Time, or Space-Time, which this philosophy postulates as the substratum of reality, is shown to be but a new disguise for divine activity—a metaphysical Substance-philosophy that subjectivizes Time and Change, that gives to thought a merely contemplative role, thus robbing reason of its function as guide to action, and rendering the future unpredictable. Roberts shows this anti-historical Temporalist school to be a philosophy of decline. He stands out as one of those contributors to *Science and Society* who place the philosophy discussed precisely in its epochal milieu and on its general class basis. With Leninist penetration, he presents the basic explanation for the appearance of such trends as Emergent Evolution:

> "In the imperialist stage of capitalist development, when signs of disintegration multiply, it becomes very difficult to ignore the reality of Change and to be satisfied with a static philosophy. . . . But for a class without a future, a genuine philosophy of Change is an obvious menace; that is, a materialist philosophy like that of the eighteenth century. Change is therefore understood as the 'development of the spirit.'" (P. 186.)

As against these decidedly positive aspects of the magazine, we must set down serious criticisms of

* International Publishers, New York.

* Issue No. 2.

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certain contributions and of lapses in editorial guidance.

Thus, the first issue presents as its opening article a paper, permeated with instrumentalism. We refer to "American Education and the Class Struggle," by Theodore B. Brameld.

The article is a polemic with certain critics of the author, who had taken issue with a contribution of his to the educational magazine, *Social Frontier*. The author sets out to defend his thesis of injecting the "class struggle" in education. So far, the purpose is commendable.

It is only when we begin to examine his definition of the term *class struggle* and his conception of Marxism as a whole, that the article proves to be part of a family quarrel between pragmatists.

Thus, he says:

> "The question of whether the Marxian *system* is sound, whether its materio-dialectical metaphysics [!] is ultimately a strength or weakness, need not directly concern us at this time The question before us rather is the significance of the Marxian concept of class struggle as a *method,* a *tool* if you will, for effecting the basic changes which so many liberals agree should be made. . . .
>
> "Marx hits upon the class struggle because upon investigation of past and present evidence, it seems to square best with the character of modern capitalism, with the purposes of a collectivist solution, and with the program to achieve those purposes The fact that he allows this hypothesis to crystallize into an absolute conviction is precisely why Marxism becomes a system as well as a method. Yet to throw one's whole enthusiasm into an effort to prove an hypothesis true, which has not yet been proved false, does not in itself violate the scientific spirit. Daring, fervor, even faith, are in this sense—as Dr. Dewey has himself so well argued—rather the finest expression of that spirit." (Pp. 8-9.)

In these citations one recognizes the influence of the anti-scientific instrumentalism which Hook attempted to palm off as Marxism and which fitted him well to become identified with counter-revolutionary Trotskyism.

Brameld's arguments amount to the following:

1. The validity of Marxism as a science doesn't really matter; all that is important is that the class struggle serves human activity as a method. (A method leading with no scientific strategy and to no scientific outcome, since the soundness of Marxian theory and practice is still in question.)

2. Marx "hits upon" the class struggle because it "squares best" with the purposes of a collectivist solution. (This is nothing but the discredited subjective-idealist notion of valuation. Get yourself a value; call it, if you will, "collectivist solution"; and then "hit upon" a methodology, it may be class struggle, for bringing it about.)

3. This method of class struggle is not yet validated in truth, objectively. It is still a candidate for truth —a conviction in Marx's mind, which may or may not lead to objective truth.

4. And from this, of course, the next statement follows naturally: Daring, fervor, and faith, "as Dr. Dewey has himself so well argued." —and Brameld might have added, as William James, pragmatist defender of the faith, argued equally well: "Science and metaphysics would [through pragmatism] . . . work absolutely hand in hand."*

* Pragmatism, p. 52.

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You have, then, Marxism, proved "true" by Dr. Dewey. Marxism, lacking objective validity, finding its validation in fervor and faith!

Thus, Brameld presents you with a Marxism that is "materio-dialectical metaphysics," precisely what Max Eastman charges Marxism with being. He withholds judgment on the truth of Marxism as a scientific world outlook, reducing your concern only to Marxism as a method. And, finally, if those things have not sufficed to convince you as to the need for squaring yourself with the class struggle, he concludes by assuring you that "methodologically the Marxian hypothesis of class struggle may, as hypothesis, ultimately turn out to be false." (P. 16.)

Hence, what's the harm in introducing a hypothetical "class struggle" into the bourgeois educational system?

The article also sets forth certain aspects of Brameld's "Marxian" theory of revolution.

Thus, we are told that there is no surety that the "road to the collectivist goal" will be through majority action; "historical circumstances might justify one form of minority action to the alternative of a society like fascism." We have, therefore, to envisage the prospect of a minority action (Blanquism, Bakuninism, putschism—if the term has any meaning at all), against an analogous fascist minority action. And who is not sure of the majority road? Marxism, Brameld tells us, "to prove itself consistent with him [Dewey]." What he fails to tell us, however, is whose "Marxism." As is obvious to any one who takes Marxism seriously, the Marxism of the Communist Party, being under no necessity of proving itself consistent with Dr. Dewey, directs its central strategy and everyday tactic toward the "majority road." That road is the People's Front for defeating the offensive of fascism. That road is the single-purposed objective of rallying the majority of the working class in alliance with the American oppressed as a whole, through the struggle for democracy to the struggle for socialism.

Brameld's distorted conception of the vanguard is carried over to his discussion, in passing, of the Soviet Union, which brings him to say: "That a faction succeeded in setting up a socialist government in the Soviet Union is not preventing adoption there of one of the most democratic constitutions the world has ever known." (P. 14.)

A typical instance of pragmatist "logic"! Between the Party and the forces of the October Revolution which it led—no dialectic relationship. Not the scientific theory and practice of Leninism, not its objective truth rendered the Bolshevik Party historically necessary—capable of gauging the precise hour for the armed uprising, of rallying the workers and peasants for revolutionary struggle, and of guiding the victorious revolution from triumph to triumph in the face of the most stupendous odds—no, it was just the accidentalism of a "faction." (If Brameld means this, then logically, one of any number of groups could have done it—Mensheviks, S.-R.'s, Anarchists.)

But why it was precisely the Bolsheviks who prevailed, why despite their extreme efforts at counter-revolution,

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these other groups failed to become "that faction," Brameld will never be able to say until he sees through the metaphysical claptrap of his pompous instrumentalism. Thus, having given up his pragmatic criterion of democracy, he will behold in the socialist democracy of the Soviet Union not "one of the most" democratic constitutions, but, as Lenin pointed out in speaking of the dictatorship of the proletariat, a democracy that is a million times more democratic than any preceding democracy. Thus, too, he will understand that the Bolshevik Party's leadership in the revolutionary overthrow of October and in the achievement of socialist democracy was predicted on its nature and role of vanguard of the mighty proletarian and peasant masses of the revolution, and that its brother Party in the United States, having its genesis in historic conditions governed by the same basic laws, is steadily advancing the unification of the laboring masses around its leadership through the people's struggle for democracy toward a Soviet America.

What have the editors done to counteract this article? Of course, the statement of purposes on the first page of that issue declares "opponents of all points of view will be asked to take part in our discussions, which will articulate the disparities of premises and arguments, and test the validity of our position against that of its rivals." But is it not evident that, while the magazine should be anxious to draw as many academicians as possible, either into its circle or into discussion, it should also proceed with editorial guidance?

We ask, in connection with this article, as also in connection with others that we shall analyze: How will the reader that sorely needs the education of this magazine know who speaks with the voice of Marxism and who with the voice of non-Marxism? Where is the statement of the Marxian point of view—even so much as an editorial remark? Certainly, in the year's output of *Science and Society*, it was possible to take issue with Brameld, to refute his instrumentalist position, to set the readers clear, and, conceivably, to set the writer clear. The editors owe it to the readers, who turn to the magazine for Marxian understanding, to expose the reactionary idealist character of instrumentalism; to present in forthcoming issues the scientific, dialectic-materialist conception of the class struggle and the Marxist-Leninist theory of revolution.

* * *

A topic greatly welcome in itself is treated in Lancelot Hogben's "Our Social Heritage."* It is gratifying to note that the author, a non-Marxian (known to be sympathetic to Marxism), has seen fit to select for discussion the vital, though far too unprobed question of tradition and heritage in relation to present-day science and culture. One reads with appreciation Hogben's statement:

> "Today, scientific workers watch the recrudescence of an anti-scientific reaction in countries where capitalist monopolies are relinquishing the creative initiative of an earlier period. Soviet Collectivism . . . is planning the development of research on a scale unprecedented in the history of capitalism. Inevitably the younger scientific workers are forced to re-examine their orientation to the

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political struggle from which the Soviet Union has recently emerged." (P. 147.)

But from this point, it must be said, the article fails to sustain the line of reasoning here set forth.

We come upon the following:

"The historical fact that Marx was a pupil of Hegel, and the geographical circumstance that Germany lay midway between civilization and tsarist Russia, signify that Soviet philosophy has its roots in a background of tradition isolated from the empiricism of the English-speaking peoples." (Pp. 148-9.)

Elsewhere, Hogben states:

"An attempt to impose the current creed [!] of the Soviet Union on scientific workers in Britain and America without due regard to the historical circumstance of their social tradition is intrinsically wrong-headed and can only defeat its legitimate aims." (P. 147.)

Specifically dealing with the social realities of language, the author goes on to say:

". . . no helpful contribution to the social culture of a rationally planned economy of human welfare will be made by missionary zeal for a foreign creed unfortified by sympathetic appreciation of the contribution which our Anglo-American heritage has made and still can make to the commonwealth of knowledge." (P. 149.)

It is evident from these citations that what Hogben esteems in the Soviet utilization of past cultural attainments, what he sets up as a model for the Western countries, is the formal, methodological aspect of the process; he excludes the ideological synthesis resulting from the cultural inheritance in the Soviet Union. On the contrary, he implies that the idea-content, the Socialist essence, of the principles guiding scientific endeavor in the Soviet Union cannot be applied to Anglo-Saxon spheres.

That an eminent scientist like Hogben should permit himself to reason in this manner, mechanically separating content from form, theory from practice, is in itself an indictment of the entire cultural philosophy and educational theory of bourgeois society. For, what brings Hogben to point to the Soviet Union as the outstanding, the lone, instance today of the scientific conservation and further development of that which is best in the cultural contributions of past ages? Why not Germany? Why not Italy or Japan? Why not even England, France, or the United States?

Hogben supplies the answer when he lays at the door of capitalist monopolies the relinquishment of the creative initiative of an earlier period, when he attributes to Soviet *Collectivism* a nurturing of the scientific spirit, beyond anything attained under capitalism. Certainly, the logic of his own proposition should cause him to realize the inseparable relatedness of the socialist order, with its underlying principles, and the florescence of science in the Soviet Union. Socialism was built not by destroying Russia, but by destroying capitalism in Russia. The Soviet people, *not as Russians,* but as socialist builders, are experiencing a great release of cultural capacities in the course of the stupendous development of the material and human productive forces.

One cannot evaluate any single phase of Soviet life in isolation from the principles and practice of socialism. Lancelot Hogben, Social Biologist, stands enamored of the flower, but is unconcerned with the gardening process that gave it being!

Were Hogben to bring to a logical

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conclusion his initial proposition, he could not think of the scientific, Marxist-Leninist world outlook as the "current creed of the Soviet Union," nor refer (by inference) to dialectical materialism as the "quagmire of Prussian metaphysics." (P. 150.)

Can Hogben seriously face himself and answer that the class struggle can be advanced to the point of proletarian seizure of power, that the strategy and tactic of revolution can be formulated and pursued, that the working class state and its Soviet form can be established, that the gains of the revolution can be consolidated and defended against capitalist encirclement and the foes within, that collectivization and industrialization on the basis of the great plans can proceed, that socialism can victoriously advance in city and village, that scientific undertakings can be promoted "on a scale unprecedented in the history of capitalism"—without a scientific world outlook and its contained scientific program, strategy, and tactic: without Marxism-Leninism?

Of course, Hogben does not see that his agnosticism as regards the scientific character of Communism arises from the milieu of a bourgeois system of society which, truly enough, has not given him much encouragement to associate the underlying philosophy of a social order with science. There is little science, indeed, that can be attributed to the political economy of contemporary England—precious little science, indeed, in the undernourishing and physical stunting of millions of "her own" workers' families; in the dragooning, massacring, and air-bombing of her "daughter" colonies; in the perfidious maneuverings to deliver one weaker nation after another to the fascist marauders. There is very little science, it is true, that he might find in a bourgeois society that has long retrograded from the high level of eighteenth century French materialism—its heritage, which it has steadily pushed back as it found it more and more convenient to turn to idealism and "current creeds" for rationalizations and defenses of its bankruptcy.

But Hogben cannot lay the nonscience of decaying capitalism at the door of rising socialism. For at that very turning point in history when the bourgeoisie sought to chain science and philosophy into an apologia for its domination, Marx and Engels, exponents of the theory and practice of the modern working class, formulated the scientific world-view, dialectic materialism, as a revolutionary conception of objective reality, which is likewise a weapon for effecting a revolutionary transformation in that reality. At the very time when capitalism, certainly in the so-called mental sciences, had begun to conjure up the spirit of the slong-slain subjective idealism, when religionism and mysticism were being smuggled in to supplant the hard-won materialist viewpoint, Marxism took the field "to harmonize the science of society with the materialist basis and to reconstruct it in accordance with this basis."

The battle for scientific materialism —an enhanced, deepened materialism brought to consummation in the dialectic-materialist interpenetration — was won, not only as a weapon for the revolutionary transformation of the social order, but also for the advance

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of the natural sciences—Hogben's own Social Biology. Thus, Lenin, in his *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism,* while pointing out certain weaknesses of the famous naturalist, Ernst Haeckel, such as his failing to attack social problems, credits him with making possible the progress of natural science by his affirmation (though not in name) of materialism:

"But the evolutionary advance of science, regardless of vacillations and hesitations, regardless of the unconscious nature of the scientists' materialism, notwithstanding yesterday's fad of 'physiological idealism' or today's fad of 'physical idealism,' completely brushes aside *all* puppet systems and contrivances, and makes way again and again for the 'metaphysics' of *naturo-historical-materialism.*" (P. 304.)

Are we not justified in saying at this point that the basis of Professor Hogben's own scientific work, that which guarantees it against lapsing into metaphysics, is precisely the fundamental of dialectical materialism? Are not the primacy of objective reality, the motion and multiform relationships of things, the union of analysis and synthesis, the qualitative transformations in the process of quantitative development, the criterion of practice in the theory of knowledge—all principles on which Marxism-Leninism is founded—fundamentals of his method as scientist?

Hogben's own position as an eminent British biologist offers refutation for his claim that the scientific (dialectic) materialist viewpoint is uniquely German or Russian.

Indeed, it is ironical that he has not remembered the roots of this "alien" theory in the work of Anglo-Saxon philosophers, which caused Marx to declare:

"Materialism is the natural-born son of Great Britain." *

Nor has he remembered that it was preeminently England, where capitalism had its classic development, which provided Marx and Engels with the field for determining the laws of motion governing capitalist society as a whole. It was the classical political economy of England, which, with classical German philosophy as well as the Anglo-French utopian socialist trends and early labor movements, served as a basis for the development of scientific Communism.

It is precisely its international heritage which, very early, made it possible for the proletariat in the various countries to hammer out its basically common tactics of struggle. Thus, Engels states in the introduction to his *Peasant War in Germany:*

"Just as German theoretical Socialism will never forget that it rests on the shoulders of Saint-Simon, Fourier, and Owen . . . so the practical German labor movement must never forget that it has developed on the shoulders of the English and French movements, that it was able simply to utilize their dearly-bought experience and could now avoid their mistakes which in their time were mostly unavoidable. Without the English trade unions and the French workers' political struggles which came before, without the gigantic impulse given especially by the Paris Commune, where would we be now?"

Less than half a century later, Lenin was able to write:

"For half a century—approximately between the forties and the nineties of the preceding century—advanced thought in Russia, under the unparalleled yoke of the wildest and most reactionary tsarism, sought eagerly

* "Karl Marx on the History of French Materialism," Appendix to *Ludwig Feuerbach* by Frederick Engels, International Publishers, p. 84.

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for a correct revolutionary theory, watching each and every 'last word' in Europe and America in this field with astounding diligence and thoroughness. Russia has attained Marxism, the only revolutionary theory, by dint of fifty years of most painful travail and sacrifice, of the greatest revolutionary heroism, of the incredible energy and devotion in seeking and educating, and of practical experience, disappointment, checking, and comparison with European experience. Thanks to the emigration forced by tsarism, revolutionary Russia, in the second half of the nineteenth century, came into possession of rich international connections, and was so well informed of the world forms and theories of the revolutionary movement, as no other country ever was."

And now we can add to the words of Engels above: Without the example and the impulse given by the Russian October Revolution and the Socialist State it has realized, where would we be now?

We have heard from others about this "Prussian metaphysics," and we deplore in Hogben a concern for the "Anglo-American heritage" which partakes of the fear that many a more outspoken isolator of the Anglo-Saxon working classes has shown of "intrusion" of Prussian (and Russian) influences—in plain English, Marxism-Leninism. Such a concern, if permitted dominance, could have but one consequence: the cutting off of our working class from its international connections and international heritage, abandoning it to the uncontested influence of bourgeois nationalism.

Of course, there is merit in the warning that national peculiarities and cultural traditions must be taken cognizance of. But this is leaf from the book of Communism; in building up a case against Marxists as insensitive to Anglo-American cultural traditions, Professor Hogben is clearly unaware of the strong, explicit, reiterated rejection of such insensitiveness by Communist principle as well as policy.

This is evidenced by the emphasis which the Communist Parties of the U.S.A. and Great Britain, and their respective leaders, Earl Browder and Harry Pollitt, have given to American and British progressive traditions (cultural and linguistic no less than economic and political)—traditions which confirm the native base of Marxism-Leninism. It is evidenced by the condemnation of national nihilism, of indifferentism in regard to national heritage and pride, voiced by the great leader of the Comintern, Georgi Dimitroff, in his report at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International; by his declaration that "proletarian internationalism must, so to speak, 'acclimatize itself' in each country in order to sink deep roots in its native land."

But, manifestly, the issue agitating Professor Hogben is not how effectively to attune the general features of proletarian internationalism with the specific national traits and traditions.

His thesis of national culture involves a severance, a "protection" of Anglo-American cultural traditions from "foreign entanglements"; Marxism-Leninism is not only a "creed," but a "foreign creed"; dialectical materialism is not only "metaphysics" but "Prussian metaphysics." Professor Hogben thus denies the basic characteristics common to the imperialist world as a whole, of which his admitted estimate of "decaying capitalism with mass unemployment and frozen patents" should make him aware.

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His admiration for Soviet scientific achievements and the Soviet attitude towards national cultures remains unillumined by the full, international meaning of the proletarian revolution of October, 1917. He fails to see the economic, political, and cultural heritage of Leninism embodied in the Soviet Union today, as the first edifice of socialism in the community of socialist buildings with which world humanity will replace the decaying structures of world imperialism.

Thus, he fails to see the universal validation of Marxism-Leninism, as an indispensable guide in all realms of science and society. This clear, he would acknowledge the claim of Marxism-Leninism, as the science of world transformation, to its scientific terminology, in which he would recognize universality—and, therefore, native British and American roots. He would then, as scientist, defend the form and content of the revolutionary terminology against all who, by attacking the letter, attack the spirit.

It would have been well had the editors found a way of pointing out that the question of terminology cannot be quite so simply solved, that concessions such as here advocated by Hobgen, however well-meaning the intention, involve, not merely idiom and national mode of speech, but the very status of Marxism as science. For, it is in the nature of a science to operate with an indispensable body of precise terms worked out systematically over a long period of time. Most of the people who take exception to Marxian "stock phrases" find little difficulty in accepting and repeating the vocabulary of the various sciences, and even pseudo-sciences—to wit, "isosceles triangle," "marginal utility," "logical positivism," "oedipus complex." Certainly, all efforts must be bent toward expressing our principles in popular terms for popular understanding—and no one hammers home this essential more than the Communist Party; but this must not be confused with annulling the scientific terminology of Marxism-Leninism, with surrendering the definitiveness and precision in the inseparable content-form of "surplus value," "dialectical materialism," "class consciousness," and "dictatorship of the proletariat."

Again, because of insufficient vigilance in regard to idealism, the magazine has left misleading conclusions and misrepresentations of the Marxist-Leninist position unchallenged and unrefuted. Why could not the editors have presented the theoretical aspects of the Communist position in regard to national culture and tradition, either as an editorial rejoinder or in a special article? In issue No. 4 there is a communication by D. J. Struik answering certain criticisms which Professor Hogben brings against him in regard to the question of quantative explanations of materialism. Struik, while offering good points, unfortunately confines his discussion to the issue raised by Professor Hogben in criticism of him.

Certainly, it must be set down as a serious shortcoming, in terms of the magazine's achievements, that this important question of tradition and heritage has been raised only in a deleterious way. *Science and Society* faces the opportunity to render in its specific field a distinct contribution to the developing People's Front by

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discussing, in the interests of integrating American scientists with the revolutionary traditions of American society, the heritage embodied in the historic slogan: "Communism is 20th Century Americanism."

(To be concluded)

ERRATUM:

An error occurred in the article by I. Amter on "Developments in the Farmer-Labor Party Movement" on page 931, column 2, paragraph 1, in the October issue of THE COMMUNIST. In this article Comrade Amter referred to developments in Fort Wayne, Indiana, on which the National Executive Committee of the Socialist Party made a decision. Reference should have been made not to Fort Wayne, Indiana, but to Wayne County, Michigan—that is, to the Detroit elections.

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